

Fenland Notes and Queries: a contents list, compiled by Mike Petty

Fenland Notes and Queries was a quarterly antiquarian journal for the fenland in the counties of Huntingdon, Cambridge, Northampton, Lincoln, Norfolk & Suffolk. It appeared in 69 parts from 1889 to April 1906.

It was a forum in which people sent in questions about the history, ecology etc of the fens and the region to which others replied with an answer which shared information on the fenland area. People contributed articles on often minor aspects and invited others to comment.

Vols 1, 4 & 5 can be downloaded from the Internet Archive website and all can be consulted on the Proquest 'British Periodicals' website available through Cambridge University Library.

I have a photographic copy of each page if you need it.

Several of the entries below have 'c' numbers – eg # c.54.3; these indicate the subject of the article using the classification numbers used by the Cambridgeshire Collection. There are spelling mistakes and other errors. Please forgive or correct them

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Fenland Notes and Queries vol.1

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- 43 the ancient Britons
- 43 will of William Mareys, chaplain of Wisbech 1452 # c.54.5
- 46 MAGISTRATES in fens 1650 # c.34.7 c.44.16 # c.44.26
- 47 incendiarism at Boston 1288
- 48 The Isle of Ely and the men of Lynn in the Civil War 1266

The civil war in the reign of Henry III reached the fen district, 1266. The King was engaged in besieging the Castle of Kenilworth with the whole of his forces; and the disinherited seized the opportunity of laying waste the land round Cambridge and Huntingdon. These men were rebels who had taken part against the King at Eversham and Kenilworth and whose estates had been confiscated. The Bishop of Peterborough in his "Lives of Simon de Montfort" in the Historical Biographies Series says: - "The Isle filled with class of men called the disinherited whose interest it was by continuing the war to obtain better terms for themselves; They came to the Isle of Ely on the 9th of August and scoured the district for provisions. The Bishop of Ely went to report the occurrence to the King, but he was received with disfavour, as it was believed that he actively sympathised with the rebels. The inhabitants of the counties in the

fenland were charged to blockade the rebels and prevent their escape. But the disinherited drove them back as far as Norwich, and secured an immense booty from Norwich as well as from Cambridge. The citizens of Lynn thought this a good opportunity for the recovery of their liberties which the King had taken away from all the cities and towns which had opposed him. They accordingly proposed to him to purchase the restoration of their liberties by bringing the rebels who were in the Isle of Ely to him, alive or dead. The King assented and the men of Lynn collected an immense number of common people, armed in various ways, Archers and slingers been especially named, and some ships. The disinherited, warned of the coming attack, fixed their standard on the dry land, so that the men of Lynn might know where they were. When these had disembarked, the rebels took down their standard, and feigned fight, as though not venturing to resist so great a multitude. The men of Lynn, and their forces fell victim to this. They pursued the pretended fugitives in a disorderly rush, with the inevitable consequence. The disinherited turned, surrounded and slew a great number, and made prisoner of many who attempted to get back to the ships. Of these some were put to death, others kept for ransom. Very many perished in the water; a few, "Not Without mockery," succeeded in getting to Lynn. The army of the disinherited maintained their position in the Isle of Ely until 1268. In that year the King HENRY III blockaded isle and his son made bridges of wicker-work and planks under instruction of inhabitants in most suitable places, and to him the disinherited led submitted themselves, some of them having succeeded in making the escape. The sixpence had offered favourable terms, and they were excepted on the 11th of July. The award of Kenilworth had previously moderated the grievances of the disinherited, and many had already availed themselves of its provision.

c.44.13 c.45.1;

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50 record of FLOODS, WEST WALTON, - inundation by sea 1613 & 1671a framed board standing against wall near the vestry of the Church of St Mary demonstrates the inundation of Marshland by the sea in 1618 and 1671 and either a "fresh," - probably by the floods of rain which for some reason the dykes were unable to carry off, or by the overflow of the river in 1614. The inscription is in black letters on a white ground. It says "that on he first of November 1613 the sea broke in and overflowed all Marshland to the great danger of men's lives and loss of goods; 1 the three and 20th day of March; 1614 this country was overflowed with the fresh. And one the 12th and 13th of September 1671 all marshland was again overflowed by the violence of the sea # c.12.5

51 neighbourhood of Cambridge 1786 – Gunning

52 Huntingdonshire giant

53 yeomanry cavalry and volunteer infantry, 1804 – names for ELY and SOHAM # c.45.3

54 The Browns of Walcot, Barnack

55 sale of SOMERSHAM manor and lands 1600 # c.32.3

57 PARSON DROVE registers # c.54.3

61 RABBITS and riverbanks - exempted from banning on killing Them in Lincs due damage to banks, 1763; otherwise to be encouraged as many acres unfit for cultivation yet same suitable for breeding conies # c.19

62 WOAD

63 inscribed lock GEDNEY church

64 inscriptions in BOURN abbey church

65 a strange worm found in the heart of a horse at Spaldwick

66 bygone days at COLNE – 1730s

67 state prisoners at Wisbech # c.34.9

67 queens buried in Peterborough cathedral

67 Robert Smyth's collections for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire – Woodston

68 court martial at Peterborough 1791

69 The drowned fens - DUGDALE notes on drowned fens; " it has long been a received opinion, as well by the borderers on the fens as others, that the total drowning of this great level (whereof we have in our times been eye witnesses) have, for the most part, been occasioned by the neglect of putting the laws of sewers into due execution in these latter times; and that before the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII the passages for the water were kept with cleansing, and the banks with better repair, chiefly through the cost of those religious Houses . The first attempt to cleanse the outfalls was the Commission granted by Queen Elizabeth in the twentieth year of her reign to eleven gentlemen "for the draining of the fens, through and by the drain called Clowes crosse, and so to the sea. In 43 Elizabeth a statute was passed "for the recovering of many thousand acres of marshes and other grounds, subject commonly to surrounding, within the Isle of Ely and the counties of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, Lincoln, Norfolk" and four others, enacting at the owners of surrounded wastes and Commons might contract for part of such Commons and wastes with any person you would undertake the draining. But under this Act little was done as it was passed so late in the Queen's reign. In 1605 letters were sent by the King to the commissioners of sewers of the district encouraging their proceedings, offering a part of his lands towards the charge of their recovery and appointing Henry Totnall and John Hunt to view the fens and to confer with the Commissioner. The work of draining was, after long debate, pronounced "feasible, and without any peril to any haven or county," and a particular examination of the whole level was made in June of the same year, and a report sent to the King, who sent letters instructing them "to fall in and speedily with the work, and the rather, because that was a dry summer, and so the more proper for it. On July 13 a certificate was sent of the total acreage of the fens, amounting to 307,242 acres. The work was very soon taken in hand, but it progressed slowly; and considerable opposition to the works was raised by "divers perverse spirited people" so that after describing the progress during the next six years, Dugdale laments how little was done, and that now there was a stop for five years at least. The opponents not only brought suits at law, "against the commissioners, but also made "libellous songs to discourage the work," of which he gives an example, "The Powte's complaint." The years 1617-1618 seem to have been occupied with meetings, petitions, orders, and reports, and in 1619 a treaty was made with Sir William Ayloff, Anthony Thomas and others as undertakers of the drainage project and the King signified his acceptance of the arrangements on September 4th 1619. In April 1620 the undertakers expressly agreed to drain the fens without any tax, and within three years, if the lands which they claimed as a competent recompense should be sufficiently assured to them, their heirs and assigns, for ever. They were to "open the outfalls of Nene and Welland, and make those rivers navigable as high as Wisbech and Spalding", and they were "not to forget to preserve the navigation" between Cambridge and Lynn. The lands they claimed, however, for some reason or other, could not be conceded. But in 1621 the adventurers were decreed 120,000 because, and the King declared "himself the principle undertaker." but this Royal interference did not help the work, and nothing whatever was done during the remainder of his reign. In 1629 a tax of six shillings an acre was made on all the "marishs, Fenny, waste, and the surrounded grounds," to secure a general draining, and a contract was made with Sir Cornelius Vermuyden to drain the level, and he demanded 95,000 acres in recompense. But the country disliked entrusting the work to an alien, and petitioned Francis, Earl of Bedford, to undertake the work himself, and this he agreed to do on the same terms. The agreement is given at length; the King however claiming 12,000 acres for his assent, to be laid out on lands belonging to the manor of Whittlesey, and 80,000 acres were assigned to the adventurers. What became of the 3,000 acres left nest, as the full amount of 95,000 acres is repeatedly mentioned, does not appear. All been settled, the Earl took in divers other adventurers, 13 number, to share with him the expense and the profit, he himself only retaining the three-twentieths of the whole undertaking. On March 13 1684, Letters patent of incorporation to these undertakers, with some others, were granted, "by the name of a governor, deputy governor, two bailiffs, and commonalty" of a body politic, to be guardians and conservers of the fens. The first members of the Society were these Francis, Earl of Bedford, Oliver Earl of Bullingbroke, Henry, Lord Maltrevers; Edward, Lord Gorges; Sir Francis Crane; Sir Miles Sandys; Sir Thomas

Teringham; Sir Robert Lovell; Sir Filbert Vernet; William Sams; Oliver S. John; Anthony Hamond & Samuel Spalding # c.29

71 DODDINGTON yeomanry cavalry 1793 # c.45.3

72 The Browns of Walcot

74 The OUSE AT AUCTION, 1892

74 storms in last century : The greatest storm of hail, attended with thunder and lightning, that has been known in the memory of man, lately fell at Littleport; some of the hailstones measured three inches about, and the ground was covered more than six inches deep on the level; the storm entirely destroyed a large field of hemp, except one corner, so that it has been ploughed and sowed again; the fruit trees appear as in the fall of the leaf, the ground being covered with leaves etc. Some of the stones that lay in a North aspect were measured the Thursday after and were then two inches and a half - June 1760. The most violent storm of thunder and lightning, and hail, happened in the Isle of Ely, by which eight farmers only, are said to have sustained damage in their crops to the amount of £3,000. Some of the hailstones measured six inches round, others fell in square pieces and killed crows, lapwings and other birds. In short no storm ever appeared so destructive and terrible in those parts - July 16 1769. In a dreadful storm at Haddenham Hillrow four mares were killed by the lightning - September 1774. This night and that the two following days, there blew the greatest storm of any that happened for some time past. On the night of the twentieth, it demolished the vane of the cathedral of Ely and all its appurtenances, with part of the stone work of the turret on which the vane was November 19 1776 - LITTLEPORT, HADDENHAM, ELY CATHEDRAL # c.12.6

75 EARTHQUAKES in fenland

76 Poor badge # c.32.9

77 towns villages and hamlets in fenland - list

79 ford at the dam, WEST WALTON

81 INDULGENCES in registers of the Bishops of Ely - releasing people from punishment - includes 1400 for Denny and STRETHAM causeway, 1401 for EARITH causeway and Hy Bourne, hermit there & 1406 Jo Spenser poor hermit, 1404 for Witchford causeway, 1405 LITTLEPORT buildings destroyed by fire # c.44.65

83 SOMERSHAM notes - manor 1589

89 Westminster assembly – puritan ministers

90 the seven associated counties 1642 # c.45.2

91 WOAD & p139

93 Job Tookie, vicar of St Ives, 1644

94 William GREEN of MANEA - historian, his house a museum in miniature he was a thorough fenman and had a very comprehensive knowledge of the history and geology of the Isle of Ely. Antiquarianism was his hobby, and he had pretty good scope for the development of his taste. This house is a museum in miniature

95 Holy rood at Boston

95 chaplains of the chantry on the green at ELY CATHEDRAL

97 FEN provincialisms - c.71 & p135

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100 PARSON DROVE deeds

101 monumental inscriptions in COLNE church

102 Bishop Pecock of Chichester a prisoner at THORNEY ABBEY, 1450s & p110

103 A fortunate venture - placing boy in East India Company

104 William PIERREPONT

105 'Surprising phenomenon of light' – writings by Elisha Smith

105 dry rot

105 recusants money 1639

106 sequestrators 1643

107 Lynn law – act

- 108 Smyths's collections
- 108 brief for FORDHAM - fire 1713 # c.34.75
- 110 Bishop Pecock at Thorney
- 110 Press gang at Walton 1757
- 111 Cotton of Connington, Hunts
- 112 Will of David Pole, bishop of Peterborough 1568
- 113 Levering family
- 114 historical tombs # c.62
- 117 PIDLEY church
- 120 The Browns of Walcot
- 123 THORNEY volunteer infantry 1803-05 # c.45.3
- 124 SOHAM history; fire at FORDHAM 1600 # c.34.75, storms and earthquakes # c.12.6 # c.12.8 MARRIAGE and other church procedures c.80.01; CLOCKS faulty & hour glass set up; 1601 church in great decay - several times stones fell down while a prayer;
- 129 the bounds of Peterborough old parish and Borough Great Fen
- 133 FENNIFERS - officers in charge of fishing rights, GLATTON
- 137 drainage of fens - documents in Ely Episcopal records # c.29 & p185
- 138 Earl Waltheof
- 138 missing manuscripts
- 139 Woad
- 139 hops
- 140 Whittlesey manors
- 140 The Talbot Inn, Peterborough 1725
- 141 C13 memorial slab to William de Warmington at CROWLAND ABBEY # c.62
- 142 The limits of Kesteven and Holland
- 147 longevity in Cambs & Hunts 1813-30, over 90s # c.31
- 148 Carbook
- 149 "United people" at ELY, 1650s - sermons by COB # c.80.03 & p186
- 149 Gedney terrier

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- 150 BLIND SEXTON of CROWLAND
- 150 will of John HOLLAND of CROWLAND, 1567 # c.54.5
- 152 West Walton registers
- 153 PLAGUE in the fens C16 & C17 # c.21.1
- 158 opposition to DRAINAGE schemes including Cambridge & poem each successive attempt at improving the drainage of the fens was met by opposition from some who believe that their vested interests would in some way suffer. Sometimes the residents thought their occupation would be gone; many had made a living out of the natural produce, which would grow no more as reeds and sedge; others from catching the wild fowl and fish, which would be driven away; others from cutting and stacking turf for fuel; and all these supposed they would be reduced to poverty when the fens were drained. The antagonism would be similar to what was seen among agricultural labourers when steam machinery was introduced, the feelings in many cases developing into riots and outrages, and even bloodshed. Opposition to Whittlesey mere. A worthy Alderman of Cambridge likened the fens to a crust of bread swimming in a dish of water, as under a depth of eight or 10 feet of earth the hall was nothing, he said but mere water, the draining thereof was therefore impossible. It was affirmed by his opponents that interest had betrayed his judgement into an evident error, and that his brain, rather than this floating earth, seemed to swim. The savans of Cambridge then urged that the Cam would have its stream dried up by the draining of the fens, and as Cambridge is concerned in its river, so the well being of the whole country, yea, of the whole kingdom, is concerned in Cambridge and its university, and the stream of knowledge would be dried up with the stream of Cam. It was, therefore, not unreasonable that driver men's particular profit, should be preferred for a universal good, - or the good of a university.

Assurances were given that no damage should accrue to the river Cam; on the contrary, "to take away the thief is not wasting nor weakening the wick of the candle." Those who professed to be the poor man's friends brought forward other objections. They said that the fens were nurseries and seminaries of fish and fowl which would be destroyed by the draining; that the sedge, turf, and reed would likewise be destroyed, and that many thousand people then gained their livelihood by fishing and fowling in the fens, while the turf furnished fuel for the poor. The answers to these objections were forcibly though quaintly put. It was said that a large first course at any man's table, compensates for his shorter second course; and who would not prefer a tame sheep before a wild duck, and a good fat ox before a well grown eel; while the people employed might turn their industry to a more profitable account. The sedge etc would be replaced by good grass and grain. He cannot complain of wrong who has a suit of buckram taken from him and one of velvet given instead. Perhaps one of the most singular is the protest of Dean Duport in the seventeenth century. It takes the form of a set of verses in Latin published 1676 the poems will be seem to be full of humour. Possibly he meant the whole to be no more than a joke. He attributes all such schemes to avarice. Would the drainers have oats grow in the middle of the sea? The poor dumb fishes cannot utter their complaints, so he will speak for them. Oxen have their pastures, sheep their rich meadows, worms even their earth and birds their air. Are fishes alone to be driven from their haunts. Let cattle keep the land, and leave the water to the fishes. It is after all no more than an attempt to wash an Ethiopian white. The siphons, and pumps, and pulleys, and wheels, and dams will all be employed in vain and some mighty flood will overturn all the contrivances, and engines, and the water will burst through the artificial embankments, and the scaly race of fishes regain their old abodes. It then gives the poem in Latin. Also refers to Dick of fens for opposition to drainage # c.73 c.29 # c.12.5

161 WYCHE family of CROWLAND & p192

3 total eclipse of 1715 # c.12.3

163 Headswoman

164 redrainage of WHITTLESEY MERE - 28 Nov 1892 first sod cut for new drainage scheme, the shrinkage of the land and prevalence of wet seasons have made it necessary to take steps to prevent the water again overflowing the entire site

164 ROMAN villa near DEVILS DITCH, SWAFFHAM PRIOR # c.41

167 West Walton church OVERSEERS' accounts

170 arson at SOMERSHAM, 1824 # c.34.75

172 dry rot

173 ST IVES fair 1275 # c.27.3

173 instructions to jury men on the Commission of SEWERS, 1664 - tells what to look out for etc in Pinchbeck area; includes : what to view : navigation of ships, boats, ballingers (described as fresh water vessels of the greatest bulk, framed with oars and without sails) in rivers streams and other floods; draining; walls and banks - of rivers fens and sea. Water courses, gutters, ditches, trenches and sewers, goats and floodgates. Land passages as calseys, "passage ways, made of stone etc" and thence they have their name "a calce," bridges etc. What to present. Defaults in any of the foregoing works. Also particular abuses, from the miller in his mill, milldam and flood gates; the Fisher, in his garters, weares, hebbing weares, keddles and heckes; all of them engines and devices to catch fish; and by stopping or straightening of the rivers, all of them impediments to navigation. Also all other incidents lets and annoyances. # c.29

178 Jane STUART, natural daughter of KING JAMES II, lived & buried WISBECH, attended QUAKER meeting

180 West Walton overseers' accounts

180 fen provincialisms # c.71

185 fennifers

186 'United People' at Ely

187 rainfall in fens 1875-1883 # c.12.4

188 sacrilege at Spalding church 1776

188 Oliver GOLDSMITH & LEVERINGTON

- 189 bases of boundary pillars at WEST WALTON
- 192 Wyche family of Crowland and Stamford
- 194 Bishop Watson, prisoner at Wisbech
- 194 Peterborough volunteer cavalry
- 195 a brother of Dean Swift
- 195 'Break day'
- 195 GILDS and lights at Wisbech
- 196 Roussey at Spalding
- 197 Fenland BRIEFS
- 197 SOHAM history - registers # c.54.3

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- 200 NORMAN CROSS barracks, 1797 # c.45.3
- 202 WIFE wanted
- 202 Peterborough cathedral BELLS 1709
- 203 battle of LINCOLN, 1141 - KING STEPHEN captured & handed over to Matilda # c.45.1 c.44.12
- 209 limits of KESTEVEN and HOLLAND
- 212 "A watche-worde for warre"
- 213 Lincolnshire watering places
- 213 provincial weather rhymes # c.12 # c.39
- 214 BISHOP NIGEL of ELY CATHEDRAL & civil war against KING STEPHEN, Isle held against him, Bishop collected a band of soldiers, discerning the Isle to be a place of great security through the advantage of the fen wherewith it is encompassed. made a strong fort of lime and stone within the precincts thereof; but that fort being by the power of St Audrey often destroyed, he built one of timber near to his engines of war and walled in the round hill (called the Keep) which was committed to his custody by Geoffrey de MANDEVILLE ... the King sent his army to assault it, yet prevailed little until he himself came with his ships, and ... having prepared a multitude of hurdles, made with then a passage for his horse, which when they were discerned they threw down their arms and ran away. "Gesta Stephani" says Ely is a pleasant island extensive and well peopled, with a fertile soil and rich pasture; it is surrounded on all sides by marshes and fens, and can be approached on one side only, where a strait and narrow road leads to the island and the castle, which from ancient times has stood above the waters at the very entrance in a singular manner; so that the whole island is one impregnable fortress" He then states that king came with large body of troops and constructed a bridge of boats over which he and his troops passed to the island. There were still some "slimy marshes to be passed but from private information he found a safe ford."It is said a clever monk of Ely suggested the mode of crossing the water and was the guide who pointed out the way across the marsh ... later made Abbot of Ramsey". Royal troops took some of Bishop's soldiers prisoner but Nigel escaped; he was not formally deprived of his see & survived nearly half the reign of Henry II
- 216 Edward Pond
- 216 NORMAN CROSS barracks and French prisoners - extracts from Cam Chronicle # c.45.3
- 218 Licences for chapels in Ely diocese
- 219 Holland family at Crowland
- 219 opposition to DRAINAGE schemes including several from George HERBERT stressing concern that through failure or lack of water the colleges should be deserted & to King James, 1620, thanking for his help against undertakers # c.29
- 221 Olinthus Gilbert GREGORY
- 222 Huntingdonshire deeds
- 225 genealogical queries – Crane, Hearsey, Leeds
- 226 Fenland BRIEFS
- 227 Lincolnshire Magazine

- 227 will of John Hutton, rector of Dunsby
- 228 miracle at ELDERNALL, 1505 seen by WHITTLESEY people # c.80.02 c.44.15
- 229 ELDERNALL chapel
- 231 genealogical queries – Fage, Hewerdyne, Marshall
- 231 a Fitzwilliam letter
- 232 Bend's charity at PARSON DROVE, 1593 # c.32.9
- 235 drowned FENs at PARSON DROVE; 1770 "the north bank broke", "Abel's gull"
 was the scene of the disaster; there had been several breaches in the banks previously, In 1763
 a considerable portion of the North Level was drowned & was loss of life, cattle and property.
 But FLOOD of 1770 far more disastrous. The whole country for several miles round was
 flooded to a depth of 6ft or more; an aged poplar tree at Wryde, that fell some 3-4 years ago
 had a mark on it some 6 ft from the ground indicating height of water. The breach was 130
 yards long and 36 ft deep. So sudden was interruption that many were ruined. Some found
 asylum in Thorney Abbey church. It was not until the spring of 1773 that the land was
 brought again under cultivation ... CONTINUE to transcribe # c.12.5
- 229 ELDERNALL Chapel, 1525 # c.44.15 c.82.01
- 236 notes on the history CHARTERS and ancient CROSSes of CROWLAND

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- 252 will of William Latmer, dean of Peterborough 1535 # c.54.3
- 256 Leeds family
- 257 a Fitzwilliam letter
- 257 ISLEHAM registers 15674-1700 : extracts # c.54.3
- 259 bibliography of Lincolnshire periodicals # c.05
- 264 WEST WALTON church BELLS
- 265 WARBOYS manor 1813
- 266 Lincolnshire magazine
- 267 Peterborough feofees books
- 269 genealogical queries: FORTREY, Marshall
- 270 Norfolk and WISBECH COCKFIGHT, 1661
- 271 NORMAN CROSS Barracks # c.45.3
- 271 Olinthus Gilbert Gregory
- 272 FEN provincialisms # c.71 & p301
- 277 family of Bishop Cumberland
- 281 Scotch Jenny
- 281 STRIKE of cobblers at WISBECH, 1539 # C.32.5
- 284 the abbot of CROWLAND'S fool, 1536 # c.75
- 286 PARSON DROVE and MURROW road - court case over repair # c.44.65
- 290 notes on the drainage of the East Fen, Boston # c.29
- 293 Olinthus Gilbert Gregory
- 293 DEVILS DITCH right of pasture, BURWELL v SWAFFHAM PRIOR, 1500s -
 including POUND at REACH # c.32.3 & p343
- 294 the limits of KESTEVEN and HOLLAND
- 297 will of Bodenham Wingfield of WARBOYS, 1639 # c.54.5
- 298 John CLARE exhibition

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- 301 "A wathe-worde for warre"
- 301 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 302 ELM in the olden times
- 304 attempt to raise price of CORN at ELY, by William Margetts - offered 6/- bushel
 when 5/9 requested ... made to pay £50 to Ely poor, £50 to Cambridge poor & make public
 apology in Ely market place ... it causing distress to poor # c.22 # c.32.9

305 sonnet on the fenland # c.73
 305 bibliography of Lincolnshire periodicals # c.05
 308 history of SOHAM cont. – lands
 312 Peterborough post
 312 John Palmer, archdeacon of Ely
 313 inscriptions at ETON
 314 Standish family of Peterborough
 316 origin of the name ELY # c.48 & p371
 318 union of the convent of PEAKIRK with CROWLAND, 1018
 320 water party on WHITTLESEY MERE, 1669 - poem # c.73
 322 KING GEORGE IV & BENTHAM - used to visit TATTERSALL at HIGHFLYER
 HALL, ELY
 323 rainfall in the FENland # c.12.4
 324 BOURNE
 325 William HARRISON, the fen poet - seeks compile volume his poetry # c.73
 326 fen provincialisms # c.71 & p359 p392
 331 Dan Ambrose Caster, accused of treason, 1159
 333 train band at WHITTLESEY, 1716 # c.45.3
 334 bibliography of Lincolnshire periodicals # c.05
 335 genealogical queries – Marshall, Austin
 336 MARKET DEEPING BELLS
 337 HOLBEACH registers
 339 fortified houses in the fens
 339 bequests for church fabric ... includes rector of HADDENHAM, 1382 leaves 100
 marks for making a window of five lights in the chancel & body of church, William Smith of
 THETFORD desires that a porch be made on south side, 27 Aug 1489 # c.61.3
 341 streets and district names in WHITTLESEY # c.48
 342 HOLBEACH householders 1801
 343 the DEVIL'S DITCH – encroachment SWAFFHAM PRIOR
 346 PLAGUE in the fens 1646
 346 BROWNE family of CROWLAND - issued TOKEN, 1666 # c.42
 348 the Straw Bear
 349 DEEPING fen drainage

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350 will of Edmund Mounsteven of PASTON, 1635 # c.54.5
 355* Anderson's camp 1638 - Miles SANDYS relates incident at LITTLEPORT where
 labourers assembled for game of football which used as excuse to break down banks ...
 previously evil persons had broken Oldfield dyke, Marshland by reason whereof the
 Marshland has been drowned and surrounding cattle and beasts lost and much people have
 been drowned in their beds within their houses ... cutting dykes made a capital felony ... 22
 Hy VIII ch11 # FLOODS # c.29 # c.38 : football # c.12.5
 359 fen provincialisms # c.71
 363 Latitude men
 363 Potation day
 364 the limits of KESTEVEN and Holland
 366 DEEPING fen drainage
 370 Lincolnshire naturalists' union
 371 origin of the name ELY # c.48
 373 SOHAM BRIEF book inc BARNWELL 1734 loss by fire £6874 from house to
 house, 1735, Sept SWAFFHAM PRIOR loss by fire £1734, 1740, Aug HINXTON
 fire 1740 Nov for Sutton by letter of request; 1742 Mar SUTTON fire nothing, tho £1.17.10
 in 1743; 1761, Apr HADDENHAM fire; briefs discontinued by Act Parl 1828
 385 The Grey or Franciscan friary, Stamford

391 DEEPING fen ducking – decoys
 392 fen provincialisms # c.71
 395 prisoners for religion at WISBECH ... 1st castle erected by William destroyed by
 FLOOD from sea 1236 # c.80.02 # c.12.5

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400 Font at Walsoken
 401 WHITTLESEY volunteer infantry 1806 # c.45.3
 402 opposition to drainage by Soke pf Peterborough 1650 # c.29
 404 cutting fen banks
 405 NORMAN CROSS barracks # c.45.3
 406 St High's pet swan
 408 foundation of RAMSEY ABBEY
 410 funeral of Sir William Fitzwilliam, 1534
 End

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1 editorial
 2 WHITTLESEY MERE
 4 The Welland
 4 Peterborough court, Fleet Street
 6 Yaxley stone mill # WINDMILL
 6 Cambridge University church goods 1513
 7 'Privilege Place' in Cowbit
 8 fen RIOTS in the 17th-century # c.34.6 # c.44.16 # c.44.26 C17 State Papers
 1637? : report of Joseph Butler and Jasper Hetley messengers of the Chamber into the great level of the fens to apprehend persons found disturbing the works of draining; near Wicken they met Peter Jarvis constable; he persuaded them not to adventure into Wicken, the people being prepared to resist, and those of Soham, Barrack and Tottenham having agreed to help them. Ultimately the messengers with the constable and Minister of the Parish entered the town, the messengers being on horseback. The people came out with pitchforks and poles and gathered round a place where great heaps of stones were made. Amongst them John Moredack a principal rioter was charged to obey the councils warrant. When the messengers approached him, he pushed at them with his pike. The people prepared to assist him and the women got together to the heaps of stones to throw at the messengers, who were scoffed at, and abused by the whole multitude
 1636, Jun 6 Sir Miles Sandys the elder to Sir Miles Sandys the younger - received message from the council requiring attendance at the board. You know the inability of my body I pray you make my excuse. I cannot conceive of any occasion but some suggestion from my cousin Isaac Barrow about the tumult in Wicken where he dwells, which he suffered unpunished, and would now make show as if he stood in fear of his life, and that none would obey his warrants. It is believed in these parts that he can rule them all with a word of his mouth. So his son in law Grimmer, Curate of Wicken, could do in his absence, as Mr Hetley, one of the King's messengers, after himself and two other messengers were by threats and force driven out of the town, told me. The question of speech about me the thus arises. One Barker, a labouring man dwelling near me in Haddenham came and told me of a great riot made at Wicken by hurling in my Lord of Bedford works, and withall told me of treasonable speeches used by one Howell of Bott Soham against his Majesty. I told Barker that I dwelt in the Isle of Ely and had not authority in the shire where these words were spoken and required seem to address themselves to Mr Barrow the next Justice

Word is bought that the country rose up against Bedford both in Coveney and Littleport by the example of Wicken men. I fear if present order be not taken it will turn out to be a general rebellion in all the fen towns WICKEN # c.29 c.34.6 # COVENEY # LITTLEPORT

10 history of SOHAM

14 MILITIA flogging at ELY 1809 c.45.3 riots

In June 1809 the militia assembled in Ely for drill and training for the customary period of 28 days. Considerable dissatisfaction existed amongst men on account of having to pay for rucksacks and gaiters out of the guinea which was allowed to each man. On retiring from the field on the 19th, several men called out "no rucksacks," and declared they would not receive them. The ringleaders were put under arrest, and troops were sent for from Ipswich, and shortly afterwards for squadrons of German cavalry arrives under the command of General Auckland who addressed the men, and said if they had any complaint to make he would try and redress it. Several men replied that they had no complaint to make, and that they had been well treated. The Earl of Hardwicke, Colonel of the regiment, also explained to them that each man would be entitled to a balance of eight shillings or nine shillings after paying for his kit. A court martial was held, and five of the ringleaders were sentenced to receive 500 lashes each, but a part only of this punishment was inflicted. Public feeling was aroused, not only by the fact of the ringleaders of the mutiny having been flogged, but that soldiers of the German Legion should have been sent for to assist in quelling the disturbance. Four squadrons had come from Ipswich to Ely in a single day. A correspondent at Bury sent to The Times a communication on the subject expressed in very strong language, and containing many statements afterwards shown to be wholly incorrect. It was suggested that all the ill-treatment that the militia men suffered made them so disgusted with military service that no recruits for the regular army could now be got from them. The German Legion, says the writer, had been sent to quell an insurrection of the local militia quartered at Ely, who had put all their officers under arrest, but who had otherwise been peaceable. The cause of the insurrection was said to be this - that the militia, who had come from some distance, and several of them penniless, had received no pay for some days, during which some of them were half starved. A reply to this was sent by Colonel Mackenburg in a letter from Ely. So far from the disturbance having originated in the men being deprived of their pay and half-starved, on the contrary, every man in the regiment was regularly served with three quarters of a pound of good beef, three pound of good bread, and sixpence in money four days; that so far from the officers being arrested by the men in the course of a few hours after the mutiny had broken out, 26 of the ringleaders were secured by the officers, and long before the German Legion, which at the commitment I had sent for. The real origin is attributed only to a few indisposed persons residing in the town, and a few worthless rascals belonging to the regiment, who had deceived the men respecting the necessities to be paid for by every man in the corps out of an allowance of one guinea given by the government for that purpose, and part of which, viz rucksack and gaiters, succeeded in persuading the men should have been furnished by their colonel as part of the clothing. The men are now convinced of their error, and on Thursday five of the principal investigators of the mutiny were publicly flogged. I beg leave to add that the men were yesterday sent to their homes perfectly quiet and contented, and many of them with 15 shillings in their pockets. The official account given in The Courier, the newspaper in the interest of the government, was as follows: the mutiny amongst the local militia which broke out at Ely was fortunately suppressed by the arrival of four squadrons of the German Legion cavalry from Bury. Five of the ringleaders were tried by court martial and sentenced to receive 500 lashes each, part of which punishment they received on Wednesday and part was remitted. A stoppage for their knapsacks was the ground of complaint that excited this mutinous spirit, which occasioned the men to surround their officers and demand what they deemed their arrears. The First Division of the German Legion halted at Newmarket on their return to Bury. The idea of Englishman being flogged by Germans excited the indignation of William Cobbett, the notorious political writer of the period to make it the subject of a violent article in The Political Register in which he denounced the government who had in the previous year introduced a Bill for establishing local militia of 200,000 men to be trained for 28 days in every year. This article produced a great sensation and the government prosecuted

Cobbett for libel. The trial came on 14 June 1810 Cobbett was found guilty and sentenced to pay a fine of £1,000, to be imprisoned for two years, and to give sureties to keep the peace for seven years. Mr Hansard, the printer was imprisoned for three months, the publishers were imprisoned for 2 months. Twenty years later Cobbett visited Ely and went to see the spot where the punishment had been inflicted. He had an interview with one of the men who was still living and left with the impression that he was a very steady, respectable, farm form. He published a description of this visit of a very sensational character containing of the extravagance and uncharacteristic dealings of the government, but in standard language, such as not be made the occasion of a Neither prosecution. He also took the opportunity of abusing the bishop and clergy; COBBETT comments and prosecuted # c.45.3 # c.34.6

- 17 prisoners for religion at WISBECH # c.34.9
- 21 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 23 font at Walsoken
- 24 Sayle family
- 24 opinion of Sir W. Follett – barge lost # c.26.3 cargo of corn lost through accident at sluice, owner sued Bedford Level Corporation, 1839 (? Denver) # c.26.3
- 25 the manor of the Moor, SWINESHEAD – court trolls 1633-1707 # c.35.6
- 28 DRAINAGE of the fens – list of publications # c.77.1
- 30 King's speech 1662
- 30 PETERBOROUGH feoffees' books – stalls in market # c.27.3
- 33 prisoners for religion at Wisbech # c.34.9
- 36 metrical description of the fens 1685 – FORTREY # c.73
- 37 Richard Clayton, dean of Peterborough, intestate
- 37 Northamptonshire church plate
- 40 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 41 rainfall in fens 1884-1894 # c.12.4
- 41 speed SKATING 1840
- 42 manor of the Moor, SWINESHEAD # c.35.6
- 45 Wing family
- 45 Grigg family of March
- 46 sale of land for taxes # c.32.3
- 48 font at Walsoken
- 48 bridge over the Witham at Boston # c.44.75

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52 fen RIOTS in C.17 # c.34.6 # c.44.16 # c.44.26 State Papers, Domestic FEN RIOTS C17 - CROMWELL to hold drainers in court for 5 years in payment of a groat for every cow on commons, soldiers called in;

May 1653 William Baker deposes while his servant was ploughing at Soham some of the townsmen took six of the horses and impounded them whereupon he was forced to get some soldiers to fetch them out and was much hindered. The townspeople also said that the adventurers had nothing to do with the ground and that it was not adjudged to them, and thereupon cut a Dyke between his and Lord Chief Justice St John's ground so as to make a way to carry the horses out of the ground

1653, May 31 Council of State. insurrection contaminated by the fen people and an attempt on the property of the adventures there; Council ordered a troupe of horse to go thither to appease the tumult not holding it fit that the people should right themselves in that way

1653 Aug 30 Council of State. general Wallace to send to troops of horse to the Isle of Ely with order to disperse several mutinous persons who have thrown down the works of the adventurers and to examine the ringleaders and send them to be proceeded against

1653 Aug 30 Richard Georges & 9 others to Richard Henley. Several riots and assaults on the workmen; John Drew of Little Swaffham one of them fined £20 and committed to jail but subsequently the said justices mitigated the fines to a small sum and they were then paid by the town and the rioters released. A month afterwards we found that our works had been

thrown in again by a great number of people, and they had given it out in public that the towns of Burwell and Reach and the two Swaffhams and Bottisham were resolved to rise and throw in our dikes; we applied to Roger Rant the justice at Swaffham and endeavoured to show to him the danger of a breach of the peace and the inconvenience is of such unlawful assemblies; but we found him very cold and dilatory and not willing to take notice of the declaration of 29th June last. He had seen it but was to proceed on the known laws. Seeing little hope of redress there we applied to major Tyson who commanded the regiment here in Colonel Humphrey's absence and upon being acquainted with the decisions as to the combination against us and the intention of throwing in our works he afforded us a guard of three or four of his men to be kept nightly on our works at Swaffham. On Saturday night 27th, 80 persons came down armed with muskets, short pikes and swords, and discharged on the Guard, wounding one of them very dangerously, and chased away and beat the rest, and forced them to help throw in our dykes, giving out very high and insolence speeches. We do not know the names of the parties but are confident that it was done by the meaner sort of Burwell Swaffham Reach and Bottisham and that they are set on and abetted by the better sort of the said towns. This being a business of consequence to the public peace we represented to you in London that speedy application maybe made to those in authority and able to suppress these tumults all other means having hitherto proved fruitless by reason of the contrary interest and disaffection of the Civil magistrates in these parts

There is likewise information of an attempt lately made to break the doors of the double sasse at Salters Lode which were quite sufficient to overthrow the whole draining of the south side; and generally on this side the people begin to be very high and riotous. They all talk of Sir John Maynard's petition being received and that the whole matter is to be re-examined and they hope revoked and made null.

1653, Aug 31 Anthony Hammond to John Thurloe, sec to the Council ... Swaffham and Bottisham gathered 80 of their number with all sorts of arms and in the night assaulted and beat a party of Colonel Humphrey's troop who did us the favour to keep a guard over our works to defend them by being thrown over by the country as they had many times been formerly. We have received many affronts from this corner of the country and applications have been made to the civil and military officers for suppressing them; but the first wanted will and affection to do us any good and the other power and orders from their superiors. Indeed there is no accommodation in the country for quartering soldiers unless they might be in private houses which they did awhile, but the officers got them removed that they might better play their pranks. In my opinion we have such an advantage over them at this time by this rash action of theirs that if it be well followed we may for ever quiet them. Nothing would fright and quiet them more than if there were 100 of these desperate fellows pressed for the service whose; they being all Waterman and having little to do at home make these night excursions to show their valour against my Lord generals men which would be much better employed against the Dutch. It was a great oversight to let Sir John Maynard gain longer time about the hearing of his petition fore we feel the effects here of that delay, the people growing troublesome and continue against us and raise money to bare the charge and are framing very high and clamorous petitions against us. Meanwhile I doubt Sir John's party here will take advantage of any trouble or misfortune that may happen to the state to rise and destroy our works as they did in Lincolnshire.

I have committed the custody of the South Bank of Bedford New river to Mr Ewen giving him the fishing and pasturage of the Bank and 20 marks a year fens gives him good satisfaction

1649 petition of poor inhabitants of Sutton to the supreme power of the nation. About 4000 acres of common fens and marshes which formerly belonged to the poor of the Parish were in the year 1624 unjustly taken away and enclosed and some of the best part given by some rich men of the Parish, too whom it did not belong, to the Dean and Chapter of Ely, for obtaining their end in defrauding the poor of the rest. In 1645 petitioners applied to the House of Commons for redress of their grievances and for so doing seven of them were committed to the jail of Ely by Sir Miles Sandys, who by force kept them from going forth to assist the parliament against the late King. Petitioners pray that the poor of the Parish may enjoy the

Commons and other benefits belonging to them, that the land unjustly given to the Dean of Ely may be restored to those to whom it belongs, that the poor may receive satisfaction from those that have wronged them and that they may be set to work in as in other countries so that they may not all perish of famine in the time of plenty SOHAM, BURWELL, SWAFFHAM PRIOR, REACH, SUTTON # c.45.3

- 56 Mrs Elizabeth HUDSON # c.45.2
- 62 Frederick Charles Worth
- 63 manor of TYD, 1310 # c.35.6
- 69 prisoners for religion at WISBECH
- 74 the landlord's dilemma – dialect play performed at GEDNEY # c.76 # c.71
- 75 fen riots of C17 # c.34.6 # c.44.16 # c.44.26
- 76 the manor of the Moor, SWINESHEAD
- 78 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 80 Dr HUDSON – WOODCROFT – Civil war # c.4.52
- 81 Sir William DOVE, 1633- WILL # C.54.5
- 84 PETERBOROUGH feofees books, 1670s
- 87 SPALDING GENTLEMEN'S SOCIETY
- 88 HYGNEY island. WOODWALTON
- 90 rainfall in the fens # c.12.4
- 91 Gidding family
- 92 Dean SAUNDERS, Peterborough
- 94 speed SKATING, 1822-1895
- 96 Game in the fenland # c.38 : wildfowl # c.19 restriction on RABBITS
- 98 WHITSTONES family of Peterborough # c.56 # c.45.2

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- 103 Tycho WING – Memoir of NENE outfall and North Level Drainage 1834 # c.29
- 107 inscription at LONGTHORPE
- 108 vital statistics – longevity # c.31
- 109 STANDISH family
- 110 TREDWAY family of BASTON
- 112 Garford family of Gedney
- 112 MOULTON chapel
- 113 reclaimers of the fens – Nathaniel KINDERLEY # c.29
- 118 CATTLE disease, 1747 – SIBSEY # c.22.5
- 119 fen riots in C17 – 1637 # c.34.6 # c.44.26
- 120 fen riots – SIBSEY & STICKNEY # c.34.6
- 122 Dean SAUNDERS
- 122 Dyer's fleece
- 123 POWTES complaint – author
- 123 soldiers at BURWELL, 1852 # c.32.3 # c.34.6
- 123 change ringing at GLINTON 1799 – BELLS
- 124 Manor of WISBECH – lands – c.32.3 # c.35.6
- 130 PETERBOROUGH town bailiff's accounts 1613 # c.32.6
- 139 fire at BURWELL 1727 – Puppet # c.34.75
- 140 INGULF
- 141 Maryon family
- 142 LIVERMERE, COLDHAM – name
- 145 PETERBOROUGH abbey plate # c.67.8
- 149 'Bracinum' – brewhouse
- 150 drainage of the WITHAM, 1753
- 151 FRIDAY BRIDGE
- 153 fen riots – SIBSEY 1734

- 153 Richard Warwick, alderman of Stamford
- 155 reclaimers of the fens – Cornelius VERMUYDEN # c.29
- 165 LEAFIELD family of LONGTHORPE
- 166 Justin Simpson
- 167 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 172 MOULTON chapel
- 174 curious surnames # c.54
- 175 CROYLAND or CROWLAND
- 177 Tycho Wing
- 176 Bukleley-Welby wedding
- 177 excommunication at GEDNEY
- 178 Fords and Burghs in the fens # c.48 - only 2 - WITCHFORD & THETFORD in this area - there were therefore practically none the beds of the rivers being unsuitable for fording, found chiefly between salient angles in river, were used by travellers long before bridges # c.44.75
- 179 Aelfred Aetheling aspired to throne taken prisoner by Earl Godwin; led to Ely and as soon as he was near the land in the ship they blinded him & brought him to the monks. There he lived & buried at west end of the steeple in the south porch
- 188* Baldwin LATHAM notes on fen DRAINAGE # c.29181 the Bede of Wrangle
- 181 Abbot Adam de Botheby – BURGH ST PETER, 1280 # c.44.13
- 185 'Privilege Place in Cowbit
- 186 STAMFORD MERCURY # c.04
- 186 Pamela novel by Richardson – LANGTOFT # c.74
- 187 Mail robbery 1744 – highwayman # c.26.42
- 187 opposition to drainage schemes #c.29
- 188 Fen drainage – papers by Baldwin LATHAM # c.29
- 190 ELY Episcopal manor, 1250 # c.32.3 # c.44.12 includes GRUNTY FEN, field names # c.48, names tenants
- 196 fen drainage works # c.29 ... various delays & opposition led to spirit of doubt among Commissioners - was it worth drainage after all ... summaries Vermuyden offer, rejection and asking Bedford to undertake, Charles involvement etc to time of commonwealth # c.29
- 199 QUAKER burials at GEDNEY

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- 201 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 204 history of SOHAM MANOR deeds, 1620s, INCLOSURE # c.32.3, Thomas CHICHELEY
- 208 mail robbery 1744 # c.26.42
- 208 John Baker, poet # c.73
- 209 Camp of Refuge – author
- 210 Rev Joseph SPARKE, b1682, Peterborough
- 215 Memorial of Robert I, Abbot of THORNEY
- 216 Henry of Huntingdon on the fens, 960s # c.44.11 - describes them in glowing terms, 1100s "Ramsey a fair island in the fens. These fens are of a wide extent, and the prospect is beautiful, for they are watered by numerous flowing streams, varied by many lakes, both great and small, and are verdant with Woods and islands" William of Malsbury speaks of Thorney and the beauty and fertility, describes the vines and the apple trees and commends the superiority of the buildings. Their testimony leads to the inference that in the 12th century the fenland was in a flourishing condition, that the river outfalls were good, and therefore the streams flowing unobstructed away. It was in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that disasters befell the district
- 218 Peterborough abbey plate # c.67.8

- 219 Walsoken font
 220 NORMAN CROSS barracks # c.45.3 & escape of Frenchman, 1810; describes daily routine # c.45.3

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- 221 Dr Timothy Neve
 222 'Barley Big' – expression # c.71
 223 State papers on fens # c.29 especially Scottish prisoners for drainage
 1604 the King makes use of men in the fens;
 1653 Thurloe directed to speak with Adventurers re there taking Dutch prisoners into their work
 1655 order of Cmte for trade and foreign affairs to report that 400 of the Dutch prisoners ... request of drainers of the fens for 400 should be considered ... permission given paying them as ordinary labourers
 decorations by the King of his pleasure that the French Walloons and other foreign Protestants who have long resided at Thorney be permitted to exercise their religion and discipline in the French tongue in Thorney Church as heretofore and to choose their own ministers and officers under approval of William, Earl of Bedford, to whom Thorney belongs and the Bishop of the diocese
 223 The manor of the Moor, SWINESHEAD
 225 Roman potters at Bourne
 225 HERON family of Cressey Hall, SURFLEET # c.56
 228 religious houses in the fens at the reformation # c.80.02
 232 Dr Melburn
 233 disasters and portents in Chron. Angl, Petriburg, 664-1368 # c.44.11 # c.44.12 # c.44.13 # c.12 disasters and portents in Chron Angl.Petriburg; includes 878 Crowland, Medehamsted and Ely burnt by the Danes; 974 great earthquake, 987 two plagues, 1005 great famine, 1011 dreadful plague amongst Danes , 1014 a large inroad of the sea; 1032 destructive fire in England, hardly to be extinguished; 1048 earthquake and great plague among men and cattle; 1075 great earthquake; 1086 excessive heat and a plague among animals; 1089 a tremendous earthquake all over England on 11 Aug, so that all buildings jumped up and settled down again. This was followed by a great scarcity of fruits and by a very late harvest; 1091 monastery of Crowland wholly destroyed by fire; 1094 severe agricultural depression because of burdensome taxes ... consequence a famine and after so terrible a mortality that there was neither proper care for the dying nor proper burial for the dead; 1099 An irruption of the sea, doing great destruction on 3 Nov 1103 cattle plague, crops perish by excessive heat; 1110 many portents ... Thames & Trent dry up, severe storm; 1116 Peterborough monastery with great part of the town destroyed by fire 4th Aug; 1133 earthquake; 1139 everywhere slaughter and conflagrations, fire & sword; 1146 the church at Crowland and many of the abbey buildings burnt; 1178 Great flood in the parts of Holland, the sea overflowing the banks, a very large number of men and beasts perished; 1201 excessive floods; 1231 earthquakes; 1237 fall of the central tower of Lincoln cathedral; 1247 earthquakes; 1258 great famine; 1286 very great tempest by sea ... spread over the banks and downed numbers of men and animals; 1316 excessive summer rains destroys crops, producing famine and great mortality amongst poor; 1343 great earthquake; 1349 black death, more mortality 1361 & 1368; possibly compiled by John, Abbot of Peterborough # c.12.5
 236 Francis DEE, BISHOP of PETERBOROUGH, 1634-38
 239 The Bede of Wrangle
 240 WISBECH registers # c.54.3
 243 Camp of Refuge – author # c.74 MACFARLANE
 245 HALE MAGNA church
 246 charm for the AGUE # c.39 # c.21.1
 248 fen provincialisms # c.71

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- 251 prior Trekingham's pocket-book, 1309-1313
- 253 bed of GRAVEL in the fens # c.15
- 254 John Baker verses # c.73
- 255 Benedictine rule in fenland monasteries # c.80.02 RAMSEY
- 256 CONINGTON & CONNINGTON
- 257 HALE MAGNA church
- 258 Cornelius VERMUYDEN – lived Abington Magna
- 258 fen provincialisms # c.71
- 262 HERON family of Cressy Hall
- 264 returning officer for PETERBOROUGH 1728 # c.33.3
- 268 WISBECH registers # c.54.3
- 271 CROWLAND notes
- 272 GIBBET query – murderer hung in chains # c.34.6
- 272 Potter's Gate, Bourne
- 273 some Lincolnshire deeds # c.
- 275 ELY Episcopal manor 1230 # c.32.3
- 280 CONINGTON
- 280 Thomas White, Bishop of Peterborough
- 284 Holland Bridge
- 284 strangers at STAMFORD # HUGUENOTS
- 286 fenland briefs
- 286 Barnack quarry
- 287 LITTLEPORT RIOTS 1816 # c.34.6
- 289 SOUTH HOLLAND map # c.49.9
- 290 St Peter's CROSS, LEVERINGTON
- 291 An Abbot of S. Evroult buried at THORNEY
- 293 Local antiquarian notes
- 294 Peterborough corn market 1802
- 295 MARSHALL family
- 296 reclaimers of the fens – earls of BEDFORD # c.29 Earls of BEDFORD - fen reclaimer # c.29; Sandalls cut was formerly Sandys cut from Miles SANDYS - BEDFORD LEVEL CORPORATION empowered to build churches or chapels and churchyards where considered fit

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- 303 Manor court orders Maxey area # c.32.3 # c.35.6
 - 306 fauna of the fens # c.19 – rats, frogs
 - 307 local printing presses
 - 308 THORNEY red book
 - 308 SURFLEET parish accounts 1752-97 – dikereeves book # c.35.6
 - 312 place names of Northamptonshire which are included in the fenland district # c.48
 - 315 almsmen of Peterborough cathedral
 - 318 PLAGUE in the fens, 1636 # c.21.1 - arrangements for Lincs. - view dead bodies, dogs can be hanged, bedding burned
- All persons as are visited and inflicted with the plague, (being not able to live of themselves) be speedily conveyed into some out part of the town where least recourse of people is used, and them of ability to be kept at their own house at their own charge and a collection to be gathered for the relieving of the said poor visited and infected, and also for the salaries and wages of all such persons as shall attend and wait upon them; and if any inhabitants will not become contributor and refuse to pay his goods to be distrained; there be provided for the placing and bestowing of the said visited persons certain houses within the town as the least endanger other people not infected; and if the owners and farmers of such houses will not be

reasonably entreated for a rent of the same then the commissioners will set down what allowances shall be made for the House during the time that the poor visited people shall make their abode; watch kept over those infected to restrain them from going abroad and keeping company with others that the sound. And if any person infected be obstinate and not abide this order wherein that they shall be apprehended by the watch and imprisoned and some Mark to be set upon the door; All ale housekeepers shall make such provision as the poor may have such victuals for their monies as they stand need of and if any make default such offender to be put down from victualling or keeping any alehouse for the space of one whole year; Constables shall give their attendance for the doing and executing of such things as shall be commanded upon payment of 20 shillings to the poor or else three days imprisonment; Some trusty honest man may be appointed by the Minister and inhabitants to provide such victuals or other necessities as the visited persons shall stand need of and the same to be bought and set in some convenient place so nigh the infected persons as without damage of others they may fetch the same; Two honest persons appointed to have oversight of the watch and if they neglect to forfeit three shillings and four pence or else three days in prison and to be displaced of his watching and another appointed in his room; If any die in any part of the town where doubt or suspicion may arise to be the plague, the body of that person not to be buried until it be viewed to the end that is it by the plague. Order may be taken to restrain the rest of the family from going abroad, and a cross to be set on the door. No person known to die of the plague shall be buried in the day time but either in the morning before sunrise or in the evening after sunset when most people are in their houses and at rest. And if none will carry them to the Church, then a horse and a sleigh to be provided for that purpose and the same to remain where the infected was buried last; All persons shall keep their dogs tax and swine chained or tied or else hang them that they do not go abroad especially in the nights and after warning if any dog taken abroad to be killed and buried by some appointed for that purpose and they to have the owner of such dogs fined two pence; Two substantial men to collect sums of money as assessed for the maintenance and relief of visited persons and restrained from going abroad, and also all such forfeitures and penalties as any man shall lose in neglecting to do all that he shall be use awfully commanded; There be some careful women appointed to keep and look to the poor and sick visited persons and when any shall die, they to wind them, and bring them out of the houses, that they may be viewed, and then the man appointed carry them unto the place of burial ; If any resort to any infected place other than the officers appointed every person shall be by the watch restrained from going abroad and coming amongst others by the space of six weeks; If any market town be visited then bakers butchers and other tradesmen of other places not infected, for provision of victuals, medicines and other necessities, shall repair to some place near the market town to be by us appointed, that such persons of said town as shall be appointed may make provisions for that place so visited and infected; bedding and other clothes worn or used by diseased so soon as all parties diseased be recovered, or dead, be either burnt or aired as is prescribed by the physicians and if the value of these goods be of that worth as the owner is not well able to bare the loss then out of the collections to be made the justices shall allow such monies for reasonable in recompense; ministers shall in writing certify weekly the number of such persons infected and die not, as also of all such as shall die within their parishes and their diseases probable, whereof they died; persons appointed to watch and attend the visited to carry a white rod in their hands to the end others may avoid their company; persons infected or recovered shall be kept six weeks from conversing with any, or from coming aboard, unless their houses be far from other houses, and the occasioned to manure their grounds, or order their cattle. And howsoever infected to carry a white rod in their hands; If any inn be visited the sign shall be taken down for the time of such restraint, and a cross to be set on the door; In parishes infected or not certain persons be chosen to view the corpse of such as shall die, before the suffered to be buried, and they to certify the ministers of the disease they died, and the said viewers weekly to have some allowance during the visitation. These persons appointed to be sworn to make trew certificate, and in case they make false certificates they to be imprisoned; all signs of Inns be pulled down for the time of this visitation and to lodge no wayfaring men without consent; No tradesmen in

Boston, Grantham or any other town infected shall have recourse or Commerce to utter any commodities whatsoever unto persons in any towns not infected; if cases infected be not able to maintain their visited then notices be given to the justices; All marriages, christenings, burials and other meetings for men and women be accompanied with no more persons than need shall require; Mercers shall provide and have in readiness London treacle and Methridate (astringent narcotic) of the best and such other materials for medicine as is set down in the book as a direction for this time of visitation, and the same to sell for reasonable profit;

Ministers every Sunday to make some Godly exhortation to move the parishioners to extend their charitable benevolence and to set down in writing what everyone lends unto the Lords afflicted; every Constable buy the book of orders and directions;

All fairs to be held within the district be respited during the visitation

- 323 SANDTOFT register – HUGUENOTS
- 329 John Cosin, dean of Peterborough 1640-1660
- 335 Mrs CROMWELL at NORTHBOROUGH
- 336 Dick Turpin
- 337 The Folly river
- 337 Edmund John EYRE – dramatist # c.76
- 338 fire at SPALDING 1715 # c.34.75
- 347 fen provincialisms # c.71

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- 351 fen pike in the floods
- 352 Bishop Cumberland's monument, Peterborough cathedral
- 354 WOOL sale 1830 – prices
- 356 HUNTINGDONSHIRE fens 1786
- 357 map of the fens 1645 – Blaeu
- 357 the FRENCH colony at THORNEY – HUGUENOTS
- 361 place names – NEWBOROUGH
- 363 DIKES & DYKES
- 362 SPALDING fireworks, 1749 – peace with France # c.45.3
- 367 abbot's cope at Peterborough
- 368 Earldorman BRIHTNOTH buried at Ely
- 369 Gentlemen's Society at Spalding
- 369 Sir Lawrence Myntling
- 369 SPIDERS a cure for AGUE # c.21.1 # c.39
- 370 Earl Harold a benefactor to Peterborough
- 371 EGAR family of THORNEY – HUGUENOT
- 376 John Pocklington – ejected minister # c.45.2
- 380 monumental inscriptions at SURFLEET
- 384 VERMUYDEN and the WALLOON colonies # HUGUENOT
- 385 Headley family
- 386 Stanground and Fletton manorial boundaries
- 388 George Clarkson 1837 stone, Bruges
- 388 Elizabeth Cromwell

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- 1 manors of MAXEY & NORTHBOROUGH
- 6 THE VILLEIN
- 9 Abbot's coffin at Peterborough opened 1743
- 10 Ealdorman Brihtnoth
- 11 DEEPING fen
- 13 FRAMPTON & KIRTON
- 15 Dean Rainbow
- 18 Peterborough feofees' accounts 1613-1640 # c.32.9
- 23 marriage of a Nun
- 25 fire ELY CATHEDRAL 1779 - chamber adjoining lantern, noticed by carpenter who tore up flaming boards and threw down Octagon
- 25 Laurence Wiltshire, rector of PEAKIRK, 1681
- 26 spiders as cure for ague # c.29 # c.21.1
- 26 VERMUYDEN'S discourse on draining, 1642... "rivers lye common with the lands ... (no banks) ... and for this reason and for want of a sufficient passage for the water ... all the lands are overflown ... the level is broad and of great extent and flat with no descent of its own and grown full of hassacks, sedge and reed, and the rivers full of weeds; and the waters go slowly away from the lands ad out of the rivers and they come swift into it ... out of the Upland counties where the rivers have a great fall ... tides bring in sands ... and there is but a few times sufficient land-water to keep the out-fall open. Soil is moorish, gathered and grown up higher by the weeds and oaze of the waters; many of them are rich grounds and all would (if well drained) be very profitable and become good grounds
... a general rule of drayninng ... by imbanking all the rivers on each side ... but I cannot advise to go in such a way ... for then a multitude of banks must be made ... the yearly reparation very great. The head draynes ... must be carried through a higher ground than the lands drayned which will be the greater charge and those grounds must be dear bought ... A great inconvenience on the south side of the Ouse by imbanking rivers ... there would be three or four levels and to lead away downfall must be carried by tunnels underneath the ... rivers of Mildenhall, Brandon and Stoke ... and go 28 miles before it cometh to the fall ... in a slow pace. And how such a downfall should be brought such a length without surcharging the draines I know not ... and especially several brooks which will overtake the downfall ... the level would become surrounded. And by the waters without the banks which lye in continual danger of inundation for want of a good fall in the winter, and by a wind, catch, break and undoe all again
And although each mouth of the several rives of Mildenhall and Brandon be brought through new channels to Stoke and so by Stoke mouth into the Ouse ... the downfall have no issue neither ... and the lands much subjected to drowning both by river and downfall ... cont on eve & p81 RIVER OUSE
- 38 DECOY in BOROUGH FEN
- 42 Dick Turpin
- 43 ALGARKIRK
- 45 Richard ATKIN'S survey of the fens, 1608
- 47 Black House Dike
- 47 Sers family
- 49 MARKET DEEPING accounts c1660

- 50 DIKES & DYKES ... dyke favoured spelling for bank or raised crest, which may double as road and boundary & p80
- 51 Olinthis Gilbert Gregory
- 52 Samuel Wilson, preacher Peterborough cathedral
- 53 strangers at Hatfield Chase - VERMUYDEN & HUGUENOTS
- 57 history of SOHAM ... Hugh le Despenser petitioned King, 1322, over many oppressions, grievances and arsons ... that Earl of Hereford and many others entered with force his manors, including Soham and carried away sheep, cattle, arms, fish ... and tore down houses ... place names # c.48
- 62 MORTON'S LEAM
- 62 mound at HOLBEACH
- 63 a reconciliation – sanctuary, Peterborough
- 65 memorials of Leofric, Abbot of Peterborough
- 71 Cambridge FRIARS in 1533
- 72 the remains of St Neot removed to Whittlesey & Crowland
- 73 De la Pryme
- 76 Cornelius Vermuyden
- 76 “Egypt birds”
- 77 Abbot Godfrey's bridge, River NENE # c.44.75
- 80 Dikes & dykes
- 81 VERMUYDEN'S discourse on draining – includes South Level # c.29
- 87 provincialisms # c.71
- 91 mound at HOLBEACH
- 92* BARWAY history ... 1602 church ruined for want of tiling and glazing and the churchyard walls down ... a verie fowell countre and waterye and especialye in the winter season ... 1819 reopened after completely repaired, no duty having been done for 8-9 years ... shortly before "My father found the church roofless and the pulpit swimming in a pond"; "market held on Sundays, the public house being open the whole day"
- 98 Heron Family of Cressy Hall
- 98 Humphrey Orme

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- 101 Dukes Head, THORNEY - poem extolling former inn # c.73 # c.27.4 – smuggling prevalent; Thomas C of Wisbech had old cutter that brought spirits from Holland - captured by Revenue. Fish carts that plied to Midlands early in century used to carry spirits as well. Once driver hid spirits in sawmill at entrance village. Once hole dug, spirits buried and sheep folded on spot by farmer, another time revenue search farmhouse but failed to find brandy concealed in cupboard at head of bed occupied by invalid wife
- 103 musters in NASSABURGH 1536 # c.44.15 # c.45.2
- 109 terrier of DEEPING ST JAMES 1724
- 111 BYRON statue TRINITY COLLEGE
- 113 British Archaeological Association
- 115 proclamation in Peterborough of the Peace of 1713 # c.02 : 1713
- 117 woolcombers in Peterborough 1636
- 117 Humphrey TINDALL, vicar SOHAM 1577
- 121 BURRELL against VERMUYDEN: attacked in pamphlet by Andrew Burrell for making weak banks, making hollow and counterfeit banks, skimming and destroying three times so much ground as would have performed the service if he had taken the best soil"; making sluices of rotten timber; undervaluing works of late Earl Bedford & hindering their works ...
- 122 William Amos
- 122 provincialisms # c.71 & p139, p179, p213
- 128 HACK family of WHITTLESEY – DUTCH
- 126 Cambridge friars in 1533

- 127 Lincolnshire bagpipes
- 127 Lincolnshire patriarchs – WHAPLODE 104-year-old
- 128 the Hack family of Whittlesey & Peterborough - DUTCH
- 132 THRECKINGHAM
- 133 armour found at ALDRETH
- 133 church tablet at COWBIT
- 134 James Hammond, poet # c.73
- 134 memorial slab at BOSTON
- 136 ORME family # c.56
- 139 provincialisms # c.71
- 145 wedding superstitions # c.39
- 146 Peterborough monastery: custody of the temporalities when the abbey vacant
- 147 the abbot's lodgings
- 148 Lincolnshire bagpipes # c.69
- 148 terrier of DEEPING ST JAMES
- 149 corrodies – right of sustenance – Peterborough abbey

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- 153 William Aprece of Washingley
- 157 Drayton parish
- 158 some early MARCH wills # c.54.5
- 162 GILDS at Peterborough
- 163 woolcombers in Peterborough
- 163 the parliamentary chronicle – Cambridge # c.45.2
- 164 a Lincolnshire terrier
- 165 Civil war 1642 – Peterborough # c.45.2
- 165 siege of CROWLAND, 1643 # c.45.3
- 169 the green shag – cormorant # c.19
- 170 YAXLEY market
- 171 star names
- 171 aliens in fens – HUGUENOTS
- 175 fauna of the fens – edible FROG
- 176 Lincolnshire fens in 1696
- 178* SOHAM MERE drainage ... "Downham Eau was of no use till 1666. Then the 24 foot tunnel was let into it, which was cut from Soham mere for draining it by tunnels under the three rivers aforesaid"
- 180 fen provincialisms
- 181 the liberty of NASSABURGH during the Commonwealth # c.45.2
- 182 De la Pryme
- 183 WHITTLESEY notebooks 1780-98 - 1787 floating bridge at DOG IN A DOUBLET; 1793 FLOOD - bank broke against Burnt House # c.12.5
- 185 WHITTLESEY assessment 1712 – rates # c.32.6
- 187 the dead man's hand – cure wen # c.39 # c.21.1
- 188 Orme family
- 190 G. Robertson of Peterborough
- 190 early LITTLEPORT wills, 1590s # c.54.5
- 191 archbishop of Nazareth at Ramsey
- 192 wild white duck # c.19
- 192 grant by Reinfridus de Brueria
- 193 CROWLAND inventory 1730
- 194 rainfall in the Lincolnshire fens # c.12.4
- 195 Yorke's union of Honour – coats of arms # c.58
- 196 WIMBLINGTON inventory 1654
- 197 SURFLEET church

199 decree of pious uses, Whittlesey – charity distribution # c.32.9

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203 the liberty of Peterborough – felonies 1400s # c.34.6 # c.44.14
209 meals – sand hills on coast
210 Gabriel du Perrier, pastor of WALLOON church at WHITTLESEY, 1653 #
HUGUENOT
211 Norman Cross barracks
211 Peterborough dispensary & infirmary
213 G.F. Robertson of Peterborough
213 fen provincialisms
216 insubordination at COVENEY 1819
217 Pepys at Parson Drove
217 St John Baptist's church, PETERBOROUGH
222 drainage of SOHAM MERE
222 mawts, husk, sprunk – local words # c.71
224 Throckmorton family
225 the blind rector and blind sexton of CROWLAND abbey, 1782
227 wages and prices 100 years ago - # c.32.1
228 the straw bear
229 the liberty of Peterborough – crime # c.34.6
235 water-spout in Deeping fen 1752 # c.12.6
235 fire at Boston 1761
236 star names
236 EARTHQUAKE, 1750, 23 Aug & 30 Sep ... first passed over whole breadth of Ely
fen; centre was Deeping fen
238 YAXLEY market
239 THORNEY FEN drainage - wanted WALLOONS, 157 4# HUGUENOTS # c.29
244 skating & the ring
244 WHITTLESEY extracts notebook 1780-1798; 1788 drought; 1797 28 Feb news that
Bank of England stopped payment and all other banks; if you went to the bank to get cash for
£10 they would give you a five guinea bill, and two guineas and a note for the other to take
next week # c.12.2 c.32.8
246 some early SOHAM wills # c.54.5

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250 the heron's frank – cry # c.19
251 monumental inscriptions in ELM church # c.62
254 farm inventory Thorney 1786 # c.22
255 Roos and Cromwell families
256 Graham family
257 BURWELL puppet fire 1727 & Dr Gibbons
258 St John Baptist's church, PETERBOROUGH
260 discovery of fossil head at WAY HEAD, COVENEY
261 fenland TOKENS - silver issued in 1812-13 as deficiency in small currency at time
c.42 & p329 - LITTLEPORT
264 bishop of Ely licensed to shoot game etc 1579 - lists bustards, fallow deer etc he can
take # c.19 # c.38 : shooting
265 WOODSTON or WOOSTONE?
269 Rand's church notes of Cambridgeshire
269 Gaelic inscriptions at YAXLEY
270 LONGTHORPE Hall, THORPE HALL, Peterborough

- 274* life of fenman - poem (have copy) on floods, building houses in fens only to have it washed away; features John Leaford of OXLODE # c.73 # FLOODS # c.44.2 # c.12.5
- 282* Low-fen Bill Hall - William HALL poem – “A sketch of local history, being a chain of incidents relating to the state of the fens from the earliest accounts to the present time; with a life of the author, born 1748 1812 - then was oldest person born and bred entirely in the low fen - employment, fen words, born at South Kyme nr Heckinton # c.73 # c.71 cont.p364
SEE ebk1442, pam 518
- 286 early SOHAM wills # c.54.5
- 291 fire at Boston 1761
- 291 MAXEY churchwarden's accounts 1610
- 292 rainfall in fens 1899 # c.12.4
- 293 captain John Perry, memorial Spalding church; drainage Cowbit wash 1720s # c.29
- 296 delinquents around Peterborough 1653 # c.45.2

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- 301 memorials of BOSTON
- 302 WOAD
- 303 monumental inscriptions in ELM church
- 304 the King's 10,000 acres – petitions at restoration # c.45.2
- 305 ancient Peterborough deeds
- 309 Corpus Christi GILD at DEEPING ST JAMES
- 319 *Low-Fen Bill Hall* - HALL poems - harvest prices and weather 1756-1816, waterspout from WHITTLESEY MERE, FLOODS, describes tour - BURWELL, COTTENHAM; harvest 1816 was late and was heavy rain; on 7th October said to have exceeded anything in his memory; 1st Oct sample of wheat not worth 30s, by 8th identical sample sold 45s per combe. Previous 1750 long succession of dry seasons – 16s per quarter for good barley; 1755-1795 large fluctuations price (given); summer 1756 very wet, all Holland fen under water and same all through fens to Lincoln; hay was so mouldy the stock could not work into it; frequent water spouts; 1774 heavy rains harvest, beginning 1 Sept; during month was not a fully fine day nor a single harvest waggon run; next moth perfect contrast. Worst season 1799 – bread very dear for many years past, season cool and wet, corn no chance to ripen. In many parts men reaped in boots, some knelt in boats to fish the corn out of the water and carry it to dry land to spread it out. 1763 from Michaelmas till after Christmas were severe floods in Lincs fens & fear Wildmore Bank would give way ice sledges were in use in frosty weather. Cow would swim drain when fodder scarce and hope of better pasture on other side # c.12.5
- 329 fenland TOKENS # c.42
- 333 will of Margaret Toppsesfelde of Ely 1454 # c.54.5
- 333 briefs at SURFLEET, include LITTLEPORT 1707, Jun 1
- 334 chantry lands EAST DEEPING
- 337 town bailiff's accounts, DEEPING ST JAMES
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- 339 WICKEN FEN - some talk of reclaiming it - newspaper article The Standard 21 April 1900; last important remnant ... broad ditches which can only be jumped with the help of a pole
- 341 Dr Oxenbridge's oath 1583
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- 349 Col Charles Thomas John Moorre – correspondent

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- 350 Dr DODD at BOURNE
- 352* FORTREY of Byal fen, MEPAL # c.29 – see scanned text
- 358 WOODSTON or WOODSTONE?

- 360 Latin lines on CROWLAND
- 361 WISBECH CASTLE sold by Bishop Ely under act of 1793; gaol afterwards at Ely until 1836 & plan
- 364 *Low-Fen Bill Hall* # c.73
- 367 WILSTHORPE church
- 368 CROWLAND rectory
- 371 delinquents around Peterborough # c.45.2
- 377 BOSTON stump
- 379 WHITTLESEY riots 1795 - list of Special constables appointed # c.34.6
- 381 wildfowl driving - decoys - in fens # c.38 : wildfowl; before decoys introduced in C17 was much poaching of wildfowl (Lincs); in 1432 men stool 600 fowl from private waters of Abbot of Crowland. Moulting drakes were driven by men in boats armed with sticks into a vast horse-shoe arrangement of nets ending in pipes similar to those in a decoy – continued till C17; ref 1696 to people going out at moulting time in small boats among reeds and with long poles knock them down, they not being able to swim or fly from them. In 1534 Act of Parliament against destruction wildfowl when the old fowls are moulting and the young not fully feathered & protected eggs – repealed 1550 because of impoverishment of people who earned living by wildfowl. 1706 & 1709 acts due damage & decay of breed of wild fowl – fine 5/- each fowl. 1831 another act
- 386 the Gentlemen's Society of Peterborough
- 392 Corpus Christi GILD at DEEPING ST JAMES
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- 12 the Gentlemen's Society of Peterborough
- 16 Stableforth family
- 16 phonetic spelling
- 17 Bishop Delaber's corrody
- 17 The ward of ROCKINGHAM
- 22 armour at ALDRETH - 163 bronze objects at Mingays Farm, Wilburton Rush fen in January 1882, 2 miles east of bridge bronze weapons – swords, scabbards, rings, liability to repair bridge was attached to Haddenham manor, part of patrimony of Queen Etheldreda; this was surrendered to Crown and granted by Queen Elizabeth to Lord Howard and he for a time sustained a bridge. In 1638 when Archbishop Laud made a visitation there was not even a ferry. Bridge is marked on Badeslade's map, 1723; illus in *Archaeologia* vol48 1885
- 22 Militia assessments at DEEPING ST JAMES, 1690s # c.45.2
- 28 WILSTHORPE church
- 29 sorcery at HOLBECH # WITCHCRAFT
- 33 drainage of the Great Level – monks etc # c.29
- 37 Whittlesey horse fair
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- 46 HEADLEY family – doctor, Whittlesey
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- 52 Corpus Christi gild at Deeping St James
- 53 the Gentlemen's Society of PETERBOROUGH – minute book entries
- 56 WHITTLESEY early history
- 60 Militia assessments at DEEPING ST JAMES, 1715 # c.45.2
- 64 ALDRETH bridge - counsel's opinion re reconstruction; about 1614 bridge fell down and for many years not rebuilt, the owner having established a ferry. It re-erected before 1662. Counsel's opinion obtained on liability for erection bridge which seems to have been in use as lately as 1870, but is now destroyed. (1901). Advised that it a public bridge, charge upon the manor of Haddenham, any evidence of toll implied person taking toll liable for repair & occupiers of lands formerly belonging to manor were people who could be compelled to rebuild bridge. Cambridgeshire County Council and Isle County Council agree jointly rebuild # c.44.75
- 65 drainage of Gt Level – SEWERS # c.29
- 73 'The romance of 100 years' – Kingston book
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- 88 early ELY WILLS - 1450s # c.54.3 & p111
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- 97 drainage of the Great Level – 1470s-1606 # c.29

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- 108 beating BOUNDS at RAMSEY - last done 1824, revived 1901
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- 116 SANTOFT register # HUGUENOT # c.54.3
- 119 MAXEY CHURCHWARDEN'S accounts, 1600s
- 123 BOSTON ORGANist
- 124 Commissioners of SEWERS: Hetley's habeas corpus
- 129 Raimond Gaches, a HUGUENOT
- 135 MOULTON, Lincs: COLE mss
- 142 skating at Crowland 1820
- 142 CATTLE salesman's accounts, 1814
- 143 BOSTON chapel of ease
- 144 list peals church BELLS hung by Wm Dobson, Downham Market, since 1779
- 145 stained glass in PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL # c.67

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- 155 Lovejoy family
- 155 drainage of the Great Level: ring of Waldersea and Coldham # c.29

162 WANTY family of Thorney
 163 fenland deposits - formation of fenland soils; Roman body discovered # c.41 #
 c.22.1

165 BOROUGH little fen, 1630s
 167 drainage of Gt Level - POPAMS EAU – 1570 under top work which resulted in a
 level which in former times had flown with part of the Nen to Crowland to
 Spalding, at the end of the sixteenth century brought water into the Isle of Ely.
 This aggravated the condition of the fenland, who contained in 1590 that "We
 live in sharp penury and the laboured and poor old folks and children go on
 begging and many have died this year for want of food". It is singular that when
 the whole fen was drowned the inhabitants about the outfalls clamoured for more
 waters. When the first undertakers presented their project their Cambridge dons
 saw that the days of the Cam were numbered; the farmers were in despair. The
 whole Isle petitioned in 1590 and then Nene outfall was not undertaken until
 1631. Petition complains that the area has been flooded and people die and starve
 and hope the Queen may take some speedy and effectual course for draining this
 so great and miserable a country. Several fen bills were brought into parliament
 early in the reign of James I. The drowned state of Well Moor attracted the
 attention of Sir John Popham who undertook to cut a drain from Well stream
 across the moor to Powdike. This is the work which is called Popham's Eau.
 When the death of Sir John in 1607 stopped the work a Bill was promoted by
 some undertakers for the purpose of completing the Eau. The Eau was seven
 miles long. Mr Bell through whose land the Eau was cut induced the
 commissioners of sewers to view it and to order the doors of the upper sluice to
 be shut. No compensation had been given to the landowners and commoners
 whose land had been taken and it seemed hard to then to give part of their land to
 form a work which drowned the country.

Sir John Popham Chief Justice of the King's Bench from 1603-1607 was
 notorious for cruel sentences and the condemnation of witches. He justified the
 execution of two young women at Cambridge because he was afraid that
 Christian faith would end if the belief in witchcraft did! A petition of the King
 refers to the covetous bluddle Popham offering to lend £10,000 towards the
 draining of the fens thereby to take many men comings from them for his own
 profit ; if Your Majesty should borrow but one hundred he would cry. He is
 cursed of all the poor of that part of England and they swear they will kill him or
 such as shall be involved therein. Petitions from Isle 1609; at session of sewers
 Ely with Sir James Peyton, Miles Sandys etc. whereas there are many low and
 Fanny grounds which for the most part overflown by the flesh waters for want of
 maintaining and repairing the ancient drains falling out of the said countries into
 the sea, divers of which drains have been of long time defective and are now
 wholly lost and grown up to the great loss and hurt of the said countryside
 whereas diverse honourable persons for the common good have attempted to
 recover the fens and low grounds amongst which Sir John Popham late Lord
 Chief Justice of England to his great costs and charges began an excellent piece
 of work in making a new Lode or river from March to Well and so extending into
 the river of Welney and from thence to other common and soulful fens in Upwell
 to a place called Nordelph and there falleth into Well Creek and by that river into
 the Ouse, but the said Popham being prevented by death it was left unfinished.
 Whereupon the commissioners consider the profit the countrys shall receive by
 the perfecting of the said river decree that it be cleaned scowered and perfected
 by taking up all the dams and other stops and hindrances with all convenient
 speed. And likewise ordain the river be dyked,... and ordain that there shall be
 hanged by chain of Iron Cross so that boats may not pass through the said bridge.
 This entailed heavy taxation and Wisbech sought to exempt themselves from
 their charge as it would silt up their outfall. March fen was a swamp, Doddington

men meant to fight against further taxation and Londoners had come to gather wool and did not intend to be fleeced. There were petitions against it. The Bill for the completion of Popham's Eau did not become law

The charges of King James' household were a trouble to him. He had a great aversion to the Commons, who clogged their Supply Bills with conditions which seemed to the King an invasion of his prerogative. The towns of Doddington, Chatteris and Whittlesey were much aggrieved. Cambridge and the towns within the privilege of the University were exempt from this contribution so it fell heavier on the fens. The speaker, Sir Edward Phillips, a resident in the Isle, humbly proposed to the King that he would be pleased to release his right to purveyance and accept a share in the project for recovering and issuing land in the Isle which was likely to be a perpetual standing revenue. In a letter to the King he says there are diverse gentlemen who in an attempt to remove cause of discontent as to the abuse of affairs have entered into consideration a project to produce a perpetual revenue towards the charge of your house out of the lands to be recovered in the Isle of Ely. There is a bill in the house touching the draining of those towns wherein the undertakers are to have for their charge 112000 acres which in time it is thought may be worth £50,000a year. The desire of these gentlemen is that this benefit may accrue unto your Majesty in consideration of discharging the crown of this burden of affairs and they offer to employ the best endeavours. In consideration at the King releases his rights and claims of purveyance

But King James was not in a position to give anything. Many projects were submitted whereby the Royal revenue might be increased by £ 15000. The fens were the El Dorado of the age. The madder licences were to recoup their outlay on the drainage works, and a loan by the City would be easily raise the so eager were Alderman to invest their funds in Well moor, where centuries before King John's forces had been swallowed. Madder was a root yielding a red dye. It is a three year crop planted like asparagus. The matter mill was at Leverington # c.29`

- 176 outrages at Peterborough 1820
- 176 WHITTLESEY registers # c.54.3
- 181 MOULTON, Lincs – COLE's manuscripts
- 187 surplice fees 1703
- 189 FRENCH registers at THORNEY # HUGUENOT
- 190 SANDERS of WESTON, Lincs
- 192 SANDERS wills
- 193 manor of East & West DEEPING
- 196 PREBENDARIES OF Ely
- 197* drainage of the Gt Level - Commissioners of sewers 1609 propose new cut at HARRYMERE, THETFORD on OUSE, prompted by long experience as by sundry complaints and increased to see the yearly loss and desolation of the country; and proposed straighten channel from Ely Hards to LITTLEPORT. There was a good deal of debate about the power of the commissioners to tax the country for new works, and to cut off corners and make the crooked rivers straight. The Crown lawyers gave their opinion in favour of the sewers but no such new works were to be made without the consent of owners and tenants of three forth parts in value of their lands to be changed. They thought they had power and at a session of sewers at Ely 1608 resolved to execute the necessary works to convey away the waters which caused the inundation of the most fruitful grounds in the upper part of the Isle of Ely. They decreed an established the removal of impediments near Harrymere, new trenches and sewers to be made with as much speed as possible. Also where as there is an elbow parcel of Barway fen near area there shall be one trench cut line straight by and through the said

elbow from river to river and that all the matter coming from the trench be cast and laid on the fen side. And a like trench to be made to another elbow in the fen called Barway middle. And a trench newly cast from the Ouse from Barway extending to Stuntney bridge and from there unto the Ouse through Ely fens as near line straight as conveniently may be in such sort and the same may fall again into the Ouse at or beneath Littleport chair.

The whole scheme was to cost about £1,200. Nicholas Massey was surveyor of the works and he soon had 200 men cutting through Harrymere elbow and making a sluice. But one Saturday night in August he was £10 short and the bankers had to go home with promises. He notified the commissioners that he had promised full payment on Monday and entreated them to disperse £10 for saving his credit and relieving the poor men but the commissioners were in difficulty. They had already advanced money out of their own pockets and found that the sheriff refused to enforce the tax they had imposed on the country without their guaranteed to secure him against the multiplicity of suits with which he was assailed. They had to stop the works or comply. This they did and Crown lawyers gave an opinion in support of the power of the commissioners to tax for new works. They resorted to the Privy council as usual to get them out of the difficulty. Harrymere elbow is shown on Saxton's map in 1560 must have been a common nuisance. Atkins in his report of 1618 says "from Ely the Ouse passes to Littleport in a crooked course making a tract of ten miles long by water where as by land it is but 3. About eight years since to remedy this the Commissioner of sewers proposed to cut a straight river from Ely hards to Littleport chair a course of two miles. About £1000 was bestowed on it but being a new work and not approved of by the better sort of Ely there was means made to stay it. The money was well spent on new cuts and the outlay on the sluice was small as a Bill of the work shows

The rendezvous of the commissioners was at Ely - Payton, Sandys etc were in attendance at the hotel and their bills testified they drank claret at breakfast, at the ordinary, and at dinner too, with plenty of sugar – which was very expensive commodity # c.29

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- 201 WHITTLESEY registers
- 206 gild of St WENDREDA, March
- 207 MOULTON – COLE'S mss
- 212 WOAD
- 213 James Wyldbore
- 213 Cromwelliana: a missing CROMWELL
- 218 news letter 1716
- 220 chartulary of Henry de Pychele
- 222 ISLEHAM deed 1337
- 224 monastic seals # c.42
- 227 Peterborough constitutionalists 1792
- 228 DEEPING ST JAMES contact 1698
- 229 "The heron among the Jackdaws" – song at Peterborough election, 1830 # c.33.3
- 231 BOSTON fair # c.27.3
- 235** drainage of the Gt Level - 1618 work on outfalls, survey Nene, Ouse & West Water; recite route of Ouse through Germans to Lynn, which is the wrong course for the greatest part of Ouse water for level the chiefest part of such water in ancient times was carried to the sea from Earith bridge by a stream called West Water to Chatteris ferry and so to Benwick and so in that stream to Guyhirn and so by Wisbech river to the sea, a far nearer way than now it does, which such stream called West Water is now so decayed and grown up with wreck from

Earith bridge downwards towards Benwick that small or no part of those waters run that way but in the wrong course by Stretham aforesaid to the great HAVE hurt of the towns of the Isle of Ely by overwhelming them with more water than they ought to bare and surrounding their grounds; and worse hurt will ensue if the waters of the Ouse be not put into their former ancient course and therefore we think it convenient that the stream called West Water before October 1614 be dyked, scoured and made perfect according to the ancient width and depth by such persons who ought to do the same and that there be then also set and placed two piers or jetties for the turning of as much as the water as may be into the West Water, which jetties are to be done at the charge of the High Country above Earith which have their waters that way.

But when the commissioners made decreed for widening and scouring West Water the inhabitants of Marshland and parts adjoining the Ouse petitioned the Lords of the Council for the straightening of Lynn Haven, to get rid of the many fresh waters unduly thether descending in default of their proper outfalls.

Currents at the outfalls were wanted hence to narrow and deepen the Ouse at Lynn seemed better than the restoration of West Water which began to flow the wrong way in the fourteenth century. The inhabitants of Marshland and the commissioners were not pulling together and the quarrel about the duplicate Commission damped the hopes of the fen and gave an opportunity to the first "undertakers" to supplant the commissioners with a general scheme for the drainage of the great level

The commissioners, nominated from Ely and the district near the Cam river considering that the interests of their part of the fenland were made subservient to the interests of the level, obtained from the privy council a duplicate Commission enabling them to hold a separate sessions at Cambridge. The recital of the laws of sewers made at a general session at Huntingdon 1618 points clearly to the distractions and differences amongst the Commission's thus:

The great and vast waters of the rivers Ouse, Nene Wayland and Grant often overflowing the banks of their defective channels as it were conspiring the surrounding of the large and fruitful fens and the adjacent Counties. And certain self-concerted wilful and overwhelming persons out of their own singularity and perverse disposition no less dangerously threatening the imminent ruins of those parties by spurning , against the authority and proceedings of those by whose Providence, care, industry and diligence such outrages were want to be prevented and unlawfully practising under pretext of law to question and discourage the commissioners whereby the said countries were in great distress and the people much distracted and perplexed upon whose petitions it pleases the King's Majesty to command the Lords and others of his privy council to take consideration of the premises. Who after due examination and mature deliberation of the justice of the complaints did not only present order for of such stubborn and averse persons as had formerly opposed the power and authority of the commissioners of sewers but gave encouragement to the commissioners in their wonted courses for suppressing the violence and preventing the danger of the said overflowing waters and further promised their patronage unto them and publicly read in a great assembly as seldom been seen together at a session of sewers at Wisbech June 1618 all the hearers did with unspeakable joy and gladness apprehend with thankfulness his Majesty's respected of those distressed countries and their Lordships care in the premises. The commissioners gave warrant for the general returns to be made of jurors for every of five counties selecting 12 of best and discharged take views diligently to inquire all the defaults of the rivers and sewers. And after such views they gave their verdict for the Laws of sewers The rival Commissioners began the contest for authority by countermanding one another's warrants. The new Commissioners aimed at the custody of the fen records and summoned a general session of sewers to be held at Cambridge

Castle with intent to trap the old Commissioners and make them surrender the records. The old Commissioners held a session at Stilton, when the fen droves were under water, so that the Cambridge men could not be present and vote. At Stilton on 20 January 1618 an order was made that Nicholas Massey Clerk shall not at any time deliver any records unto any person under penalty but he may make copies of anything and deliver them to such as shall have use thereof at a charge.

The old Commission protested to the privy council and "were much comforted by their Lordships order to proceed in the general business of the country. Their account of the intended sessions at Cambridge Castle is as follows: it is to be held the day after quarter sessions so that none of the commissioners of other counties being justices of the peace can be there unless they neglect the other service; they directed the clerk of the sewers commanding him to bring all such matters decrees except such laws as only concern the outfalls of Nene and Welland meaning thereby to get all our records into their hands and so exclude us from any further proceedings. We thank your Honours for your care of us but we can assure ourselves of no quietness to continue unless your Lordships may be moved to call in the duplicate of the Commission lately sent out for Cambridgeshire in regard that our clerk of sewers dwells within the said County who has always the Commission itself in his custody.

Miles Sandys was a member of the old Commission and seemed to have opposed the Cambridge men.

The operation of the duplicate Commission was restricted by order of the council to the County of Norfolk. It was clear that Cambridgeshire men were not at one, but the university, alarmed about proposed new works likely to affect the navigation to Cambridge, joined with the commissioners thereabouts and notified the Council "that the petition exhibited was not only without their assent and knowledge of any of the commissioners inhabiting the counties of Cambridge and Isle of Ely but contrary to the desires both of us and the country wherein we live, for since the coming down of the said new Commission and your Lordships order for the restraint of the duplicate there is a general session summoned for all the counties at Stilton, in a town in their remotest part of Huntingdonshire which is an innovation not formally known to have a session summoned in the winter season, the whole level of the surrounded grounds subject to the authority of the commissioners lying usually, as it now doth, deep under water so as neither the sewers nor the defects thereof can be discerned, neither can the commissioners, the ordinary passages being all drowned, travel out of their own limits without great inconvenience and hazard.

In response to this application the council sent a hearty commendation to the general session and required the respite of any laws made at Stilton touching Cambridge and the Isle and the stay of any new cuts and works on the rivers Grant and Ouse which cannot be made without hindrance of the navigation to the town of Cambridge. The Vice Chancellor and the mayor began to take an active part in the work of the commissioners of sewers, whose new works in the channel of the Ouse threatened the suppliers of the University and the trade of the town. But it could not be denied that new works were necessary. The old drains of the Isle were cut when the drainage flowed by West Water to Wisbech and in 1618 the only way to get rid of the water was by the Ouse to the Nene outfalls. The river was blocked with weirs and Hards, eight of the latter between Overcote and Harrymere. Sir Clement thought Sutton Lode from West Water to Littleport ought to be opened, but the order for that purpose was stayed by a letter from the privy council. The difference about opening certain Lode was referred to Earl of Arundel to view and record. This finding the dispute about taxation for the new work was the chief obstacle made a report to the council and submitted a proposal for an undertaking of their own for draining the great level. They had "resolved at

their own and their friends charges without raising any taxes to venture the enterprising of many thousand acres of the fens or surrounded grounds to make them dry and to be good and profitable meadow and pasture and so to continue". 1619 they submitted proposals and outlined recompense required; they hoped to complete draining thin three years. This was the first proposal for drainage by a contract between the Lords and Commoners in the fens with "Undertakers" pursuant to the General Drainage Act 1601

The preamble of the act for making dry and profitable surrounded rounds proceeds to enact that the lords of the manors and majority of the owners interested may contract or bargain with such persons which would undertake draining and keeping dry permanently the several wastes. Crown interests were not to be bound without Royal consent. King was persuaded that the undertakers were to replenish his meagre Exchequer. His Majesty wrote to the commissioners of sewers "we recommend them and their design to your special care to further them with your authority and if any be refractory you correct and chastise their obstinately according to justice". At a session of sewers held at Peterborough September 1618 the undertakers presented themselves "with their large promises which gave cause to fools to wonder at them but to wise men and of experience to smile at them and suspect their attempts". Their want of knowledge about the difficulties involved astonished the commissioners. They were invited to reduce their proposals to writing and in so doing made mention of "fresh and salt fens". The court smiled and asked if they meant salt marshes. "if by our industry those grounds are bettered we expect to have a sufficient consideration for the same" they replied; but salt marshes are drowned every day by the ebbing and flowing of the sea, and there could be no such thing as a salt fen - perhaps they meant salt grounds surrounded at low water mark - and they were likely to have accepted this amendment had not one indicated that they had better be careful about undertaking to recover the bottom of the sea.

In the end the commissioners gave their consent for the undertakers to proceed with their works, but before so doing they should give security that they would in no way impair the navigation of the rivers, and they reported to the council there was opposition and we desire we may understand the agreement with the gentlemen and others of the Isle by and through which parties we must pass our waters before we entertain any further conference with the undertakers. Signed including Sandys.

The commissioners took a sound view of the authority conferred on them by the Commission of sewers. It restricted their powers to charge landowners towards a general work in respect of the benefits which they might derive therefrom and they were not invested with power to grant any man's holding to undertakers. The King was then at Newmarket so Sir Anthony Thomas, one of the undertakers, rode over to inform him of the opposition to the project who referred the business to the privy council so that the whole matter might be thoroughly debated and the enterprise being so worthy His Majesty would vouchsafe to honour the consultation with his own presence - WEST WATER, CAM & vice chancellor the liberty of PETERBOROUGH 900s

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- 250 Bishop Cumberland's trunk
- 251 Cambridgeshire BASKETS
- 252 MOULTON, Lincs - COLE mss
- 258 MARCH chapel indulgence - COLE
- 260* ALDRETH bridge rebuilding in progress, items discovered includes original piles, blade of short sword not later than Norman, dagger, 2 Norman horse shoes;

	the bridge is famed for Hereward's resistance and by passage of King Stephen who resisted Bishop of Ely when he espoused cause of Matilda # c.44.75 # c.41
261	Wheat & flour prices
262	Essex's notes on Wisbech
262	arrest of a ship at Lynn
263	letting the poor
263	siege of LYNN, 1643 # c.45.2
264	WOAD
265	Wanty family of Thorney = HUGUENOT
268	attractions of fenland – Harper description
268	poisonous plants in the fens
269	tron at Lynn – for weighing wool
270	the liberty of Peterborough
272	etymology of GEDNEY
273	A BISHOP MOBBED
274	MARCH church notes
276	sanctuary at Ely 1343
277	swan marks in Lincolnshire
280	drainage of Gt level - opposition CU # C.29
286	Horsey Hill
287	“sarvey”
287	the image and jewels of the Blessed Mary of BURY
290	public libraries and sales of books
291	old scores – ‘tick’ in pubs for bargees # c.27.4 # c.26.3
292	MOULTON
297	Richard Fletcher, dean of Peterborough

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302	Mere recollections - SKATING, WHITTLESEY mere, 1845-1846
305	Croydon for Croyland
306	Bishop Lindsell's commendam – Peterborough 1630s
308	a Bishop mobbed
308	the liberty of Peterborough
313	LAUNDRY at RAMSEY ABBEY
314	etymology of GEDNEY # c.46
315	rainfall in the fens # c.12.4
316	DEEPING ST JAMES: trespass
317	ship of war from Lincolnshire, 1635
318	MOULTON
325	vicars of MOULTON
327	attractions of fenland – Harper
328	Sir Thomas Phillipps' library
329	Richard Howland, Bishop of PETERBOROUGH – 1500s
335	CHATTERIS church notes - COLE
342	drainage # c.29
342	drainage # c.29
	Charles I was inclined to leave the reclamation of the fens to his subjects; many proposals were made. That of Messrs Tipper and Gason was recommended in 1626 by the commissioners of sewers as convenient for his Majesty's Service. they prayed for a general plant to confer on them the privilege to drain all fresh and salt marshes and low grounds throughout England and Wales. They had discovered a new mode of draining by means of sluices and locks and undertook to drain 20,000 acres of land high and dry every year. This plan was worked on the Ouse at Hemingford and Houghton, in conjunction with corn mills. Gason

obtained the first patent for lock drainage in 1618. In 1628 Gason's patent was confirmed; he to take toll threepence a tonne at sluices and locks between St Neots and St Ives and in 1638 he had a grant of the sole right of carriage of corn and coal to within four miles of Bedford. Their recompense was to be one fourth part of fresh Marshland reclaimed and three fourth parts of salt marshes, tithe free for seven years. The drainage of the great level was not appreciably affected by these works which were more suitable for navigation purposes than for land drainage which requires to be supported during an unproductive period by the resources of the wealthy. Sir Anthony Thomas and diverse wealthy men associated with him proposed to take up the projects of the first undertakers. To this end the King send his Royal letters to the Commissioner of sewers recommending Sir Anthony "whereas diverse our noble Kings and Queens have endeavoured by all ways and means to accomplishment draining of the fens. And last our Royal father undertook the same but for want of affecting a general bargain with the country this worthy desire have been foreslowed. Now know the that we tendering highly the welfare of our subjects who are owners of any fen lands or grounds annoyed with fresh or salt water recommend to the Commissioner of sewers a trusty servants in this worthy design of draining the fens. And we require you to appoint a general session of sewers at which meeting we desire you to agree with the undertaker to settle such or the like rate or tax on every acre of land as formerly has been at which place you will receive fair compositions as to the undertakers to drain the drowned land within the space of six years"..

These undertakers meant to make the fenmen find their funds to fight the invading floods, they meant to live on the enemy. This would not do for the commissioners who stated their views to the King and left Sir Anthony to go over Welland and try his fortune elsewhere

"to the King we Commissioners did take serious consideration of the general detriment which your Majesty does suffer by their almost continual deluge of many thousand acres of land and the decay of the navigation of the ports of Wisbech and Spalding and met in the hope of a good issue of the endeavours Sir Anthony Thomas and have had diverse public conferences with them and when we desired he would acquaint us the particular project of his intended works he utterly refused to do so unless we should first set a tax of 10 shillings on every acre which we held unpalatable a burden. In which respects we had no legal power to contract with them besides we were at the same time offered to have the work performed for £35,000 by men whose judgements are greatly approved by us"

Francis, Earl of Bedford, now comes on to the scene with a useful scheme and funds to make it effectual. In 1638 Sir Cornelius Vermuyden made a proposal to the commissioners of sewers for the drainage of the great level. "upon a map or card he described the said fenny marsh, waste and surrounded grounds and the outfalls thereof by lines and other descriptions and also by writing expressed and set down what drains, sasses, sluices, banks, cuts and other works he intended " but his financial resources were conjectural and the "country" objected to leave an undertaking of national importance to an alien, so the Earl of Bedford supplanted the Dutchman in the character of undertaker, retaining his services as engineer and adhering to his plans. By the contract of 1638 which is known as Lynn Law the Earl became sole undertaker at his own charge to drain the level in such manner as that it shall be fit for meadow or pasture, or arable, and by God's blessing he will fully finish the drainage within the compass of six years.

To accomplish the undertaking the Earl contracted with 13 persons to join him in the adventure. By this deed, known as the indenture of 14 parts dated 20 Feb 1631 the recompense was divided into 20 whole shares, each of four thousand acres, which, with 3000 acres left to meet contingencies and 12,000 surrendered

to the King as a voluntary and free will offering, dispose of the 95,000 acres. The Royal share was subsequently diminished by 2,000 acres which were granted to Richard Western thus reducing the King's part to 10000 acres. The 80,000 acres and the King's share also were subject to taxation which might be imposed by the commissioners of sewers at the instance of the Conservators, who could not tax on their own authority, nor could the Commissioner of sewers impose the tax on lands other than those reclaimed and reserved, pursuant to the indenture of 14 parts and the St Ives law. The Earl and co-adventurers were incorporated by Royal Charter as the Governor's Bailiffs and commonalty of the Society of the Conservatives of the fens - list of names

They were soon at work about the Nene outfalls and making ways or roads to enable them to get about the fens. Hard highways were wanted instead of summer tracks, but fenland Road are necessarily in the form of causeways, which are ever subsiding by compression of the porous sub soil. The excavation of hard and impervious materials and conveyance, which had cost large sums for roads which sank and banks which slipped into their drains, was useless, till some constant condition of the internal drainage could be attempted by regulating outfalls. To accomplish this the resumption of full works at the Horse shoe sluice was determined. Specifications. The Horse shoes formed a new highway from Cambridgeshire to Norfolk. In 1644 the parliaments committee at Cambridge directed the governor of Lynn to secure Horse shoe pass for the security of Wisbech. Before that the passage was by Walton dam, described in 1635 as a passage having been formerly a river now dammed up being but a little Creek and parts Norfolk and Lincolnshire

The Earl and the Conservators set about cutting the new river from the Horseshoe to the outfalls, to supersede the tortuous course of the old Nene which forms the boundary between Norfolk and Cambridge

The new cut at the outfalls had been made in the sixteenth century but in 1621 a jury presented that it was very defective and the old river at the new cut mouth silted so that no water passes that way and all houses which had been erected on the old embankments so encroached on the narrow channel of the river that the Earl in 1636 had to purchase several and demolish them in order to clear the outfall

The plan of the new river indicates that the Earls works were nearly complete. Delays were attributed to the heavy cost of material of embankment. It is certain that many of the participants failed to contribute their share of the expenses incurred. This occasioned the complaints of the country and riots by the poor commoners, but the general disturbance, caused by political differences as much as anything, arrested this undertaking which was finished after 1650 when the company entered into an agreement with Sir Cornelius Vermuyden. In 1649 Mr Dodson offers to engage £1000 to make a river from the outfalls at the Horseshoe to Murrow gate 50 feet wide with banks sufficient to save the country and to repair the same were for seven years. The expenses are given including one hundred wheelbarrows at 3s/4d each

The conservators made themselves merry over losses. They built Piccadilly Hall on the North Bank of the new river to match White Hall which lay on the other side of the Nene. There was plenty of claret and sugar. The Place was laid out like its namesake in London "a fair House of entertainment and gaming with handsome gravel walks and an upper and lower bowling green wither very many of the nobility and gentry of the best quality resorted both for exercise and conversation". This home of toads and reptiles was changed to gardens and quaint mazes, the oozy marsh to odorous woodland, pools to cascades, swamps to bowling Greens and pleasant pastures. Loud from the hall came the sound of revelling: "Now we're for the parliament and now we're for the King". Alas the

hall of it no memory remains; the quaint mazes have lost themselves and their bowling Greens are swallowed up in mud

The destruction of a bowling green in Wisbech is noted in 1571: on the 6 October chanced a terrible tempest of wind and rain by land and sea. The sea broke in between Wisbech and Walsoken and at the Cross Keys drowning eight houses and Jarmans and Stowe bridge. At the Cross keys in the walls of the house were broken down. In the Bishopric of Ely Wisbech, Guyhirn, Parson Drove and Hobshouse were overthrown. In Wisbech was a garden, a tennis play and a bowling alley all about with grit was quite destroyed by the water. Disastrous floods occurred in 1613 and 1614. Through a breach at Terrington the sea broke in on first November 1613 drowning all Marshland and Wisbech. Many persons were drowned and the houses and cattle washed away to the value of £ 37,000. The mayor of Lynn came to the rescue in boats with beer and food # c.12.5

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- 351 the FOSSDYKE
355 BOSTON fair # c.27.3
355 the liberty of Peterborough
361* drainage # c.29 - riots ELY, one a WITCH, 1636 reasons against drainage in the 1687 the Conservatives were surrounded with difficulties. Funds were wanted to retrieve their position and to relieve the condition of the surrounded rounds. The commoners seeing their lands were the worse for the drainage works, meant to have their Commons again. Riots occurred at Holme, Ely, Wareham. Strong team of campers, a hundred a side, swept banks and fences away. They must eat. The Conservators had deceived the country - there cows were starving and the wildfowl were scared way. For the fowler and the Fisher there was nothing to catch. Hence a petition to Earl of Bedford from the inhabitants of Wereham Stoke. Commoners in their fens found five people digging in the fen without directions at an inconvenient place where we lay our shot fowls as would be the utter undoing of the said townships if they had gone on and consisting of 735 souls which exist merely of fens and have weekly sent three horse load of fowls worth unto us £100 per annum towards the maintenance of the inhabitants which by this digging they should be deprived of whereupon the diggers being demanded who set them on work they said a gent but who he was they knew not nor by what authority they so did. It was only then requested that they would forebear whereupon having taken up their tools they peaceably departed. We are commanded to attend the council to answer the same.
- Dr Sammes attributed that discontent to witchery he wrote to the council: after getting the delinquents together we found them so miserable, poor and base that they were not meet to be presented before the Lords; therefore on the examination of them we have committed one who was the first mover of this mutiny to the prison at Wisbech, who is by her neighbour's esteem a witch, to which opinion the messengers adhere for they taking boat near her house were bitterly accursed by her and soon after a strong man, the watermen, was stricken with such a lamentable crick in his back that he was constrained to get help. The most part of these rebels live on the arms of the parish therefore we thought fit that some exemplary punishment should be inflicted on them.
- In 1636 the reasons of the fenland against draining and the answers of adventurers had been put into writing against : that in every common fen town the greater part of the inhabitants having neither lands of their own nor in farm and living only by the fens in no way else able to put bread into their mouths must with the whole charge of children either live on arms, beg or starve

For : if the lives of them that live only on fish fowl, Reid, flag and turf be observed it will be found that for one half and more of the year they live nearly idle and have no means to set them on work which is the cause of their misery; and where they speed well one day in fishing or fowling they often miss in half a dozen together. But for the matter of fishing and fowling it will be little diminished by the draining and for their turves and reed it may be much increased thereby and so means to set them on work will be infinitely increased thereby
Against : there is never an acre of fen ground but affords more commodities to the Common wealth than pasture of 20 shillings an acre does if all fowl and fish which is taken in England were valued, which though it be not all taken in the fens yet it is bred, fed and maintained for the most part therein together with the infinite worth of the reeds, fodder, thack, turves, flags, hassocks, sedge, rackweed for churches, Chambers, beds and many other fen commodities of great use both in town and country

For : this is a gross and palpable error for of Reed fit for thack there will not be found that is fit for use 100 acres and the like for turves. And for all the rest the beggarly lives that the poor idle wretches do lead do manifest of what commodity it is to them and their expense that is heard of draining and what commodities have been grown thereby to the poor that are industrious does confound it. It is true that for some few acres of Reed may be worth 20 shillings an acre yearly but what is that to the rest of the fens which are a hundred times as much and yet that reed and turf shall be continued to them still

in 1632 when the dyke Reeves of the conservators first appeared no one was pleased Thomas Fries relates his experiences in Holme fen near Whittlesey mere. "at the time of the driving of the fens Mr Castle of Glatton a Justice of the peace came into the fen and told him that none of his cattle should be driven thence and appointed two of his men to stand in the gap where the cattle should pass and keep them from going out and he stood by while a great many women and men with scythes and pitchforks gave many threatening words that they would let the guts of any one that should drive their fens and while they turned back their cattle and he did not repress their disorder nor speak to them to desist. And since that times the commoners in the same fen have mowed the most part of the fodder there and have put a stock of sheep into it. It is commonly reported by the commoners in Ely fens that Mr Cromwell of Ely has undertaken, they paying him a groat for every cow they have on the Commons, to hold the drainers in suit of law for five years and that in the mean time they should enjoy every foot of their Commons"

Mr Cromwell had all along been opposed to the drainers and in 1638 at a meeting at Huntingdon he was as head of the malcontents in the fen business style Lord of the fens and he abetted the factions who with clamours withstood the commissioners; and in the House of Commons he supported the Petitioners of the commoners of Somersham against the Bill for the Queen's Jointure dated 1614 on May "our lands and inheritance are taken from us by pretence of laws of sewers wherewith the commissioners proceed without imposition by jury but take their own view, who are parties deeply interested. They take one half of our common and fen ground for supposed draining the rest, which they make and leave much worse than they found it. And yet expect valuation from our severalls. They bring our severalls under tax which are worth a Mark to 20 shillings the acre a year. Other severalls they violently take from us to dig their drains through them against the owners consent and pay not any compensation for them. They disdain and sell our goods that come on the ground they have taken from us and will not obey orders to return them. If we proceed at law for trial of our titles we are sued and imprisoned and ordered not to proceed. Our consents are extorted to make us subscribe to their proceedings and if we gainsay they imprison us to fit matters to their ends. Our ancient commissioners have

been put out and foreign adventurers and participants are put into Commission. Our salt marshes which have been enjoyed by us and our ancestors hundreds of years are taken from us and supposed to be gained from the sea. Our Commons are taken from us under pretence of Commission to improve for the King as Lord of the soil wherein they take more than half .

Public events put an end to the stir in the Commons, which gave the fenmen some hope of remedial measures, but the King, hearing of the difficulties of the Conservators and the hardships of the people moved in the business. Touching this, Sir J. Bankes gives an account of his audience by Charles I :

"When I waited upon His Majesty touching the business of the great level his Majesty took notice of divers complaints that men and whole townships and hundreds were excluded from the possession of their lands and Commons whose grounds were not drained and whereupon gave us direction to restore such men to their possession until the land were adjudged drained which directions we have observed; yet so we admit none to this grace but such as make due claims that their lands are not bettered by the Earl of Bedford's draining and that they have their special order of the court for it and that they shall not pull down any hedges ditches or fences but make a gap and enter in a peaceful manner. This order is pursuant to the decree made when King James was undertaker and have given great contentment to the several counties".

A few days after this Charles I declared himself sole adventure: "23rd July 1638 and because His Majesty intends to see this great work of the level prosecuted according to his first princely design in such manner as may have just regard to the perfecting the same he is pleased to declare himself the adventurer as well of Deepening fen as the great level.

The Royal adventurer had formed a plan for the reclamation of the fens; new plantations of people with ample privileges were to be located. An eminent town was to be built in the middle of the level, on the site of the little village of Manea, to be called Charlemont; the design whereof of the King drew himself, intending to have made a notable stream from thence to the river Ouse

The terms on which the undertakings of the Conservators was transferred to the King were notified to the commissioners of sewers by the King's letters patent

- 365 Daniel DEFOE of fenland descent
- 367 FRENCH register at THORNEY # HUGUENOT
- 368 WANSFORD bridge # c.44.75
- 370 the fen ablaze - fire in WOODWALTON fen, 1903 # c.34.75
- 371 Knightly families in the fens # c.57
- 372 the liberty of Peterborough
- 376 chantry at HOLBECH
- 377* fire at WICKEN FEN, 1903 - caused by students throwing match & they ran away on Sunday afternoon some men saw flames and a dense smoke arising from an area of about 20 acres, recently acquired by Mr Verrall. A strong wind was blowing at the time and although the villagers endeavoured to beat out the fire, they were unsuccessful, and the whole 20 acres of sedge and undergrowth were destroyed. At this time of the year the fen is covered with verdure like a prairie and the undergrowth being dry it burnt rapidly until at one time there was nearly a quarter of a mile of fire. A few days later four university men said that one of them had accidentally thrown away an unspent match and the sedge where it was thrown had had once caught fire and blazed freely and that being wholly unable to put it out they had run away. They undertook to repay any loss or expense incurred by their action# c.34.75
- 379 Manor of Newhall, PINCHBECK
- 381 Richard Howland, bishop of Peterborough
- 384 the BISHOP of ELY's sword of state
- 385 HORSEY HILL, STANGROUND

386 Lincolnshire justices etc 1693

392 WITCHCRAFT, 1903 : a BOTTISHAM carter, believing his horses bewitched
procured for a "wise man" a countervailing charm. It was a "broth" for his horse
compounded from horse shoes, nails and iron filings, by the drinking of which
one of the animals died

392 south Lincolnshire families - FROTHERINGHAM

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front Soham park and SOHAM MERE - MAP, 1670
1 drainage of fens - CHARLES I letters patent, fen roads - Whittlesey area;
labourers not paid "John Latch having in his hands £7,000 of His Majesty's money neglecting
to pay for works finished, petitioners forced to engage themselves in sundry places diet and
lodging for their poor labourers who have no means to sustain themselves but by the money
they weekly earn by their labour for want thereof are ready to starve and some arrested and
imprisoned ... and wives and children are like to perish, VERMUYDEN, CIVIL WAR #
c.44.75 # c.45.2
7 Richard Howland, Bishop of Peterborough
10 place names in PINCHBECK # c.48
13 Liberty of Peterborough – highway robbery 1300s # c.34.6
17 Lease of lands in BOURNE fen, 1640
FNQ vol 6 – digitised
19 land sold for taxes – Wisbech High Fen 1778 # c.32.3
22 manor of Newhall, PINCHBECK
22 HOLYWELL – underground passage, Peterborough
25 DEEPING ST JAMES
vicarage
30 VERNATTI family, prominent among early drainers - DUTCH & p55
33 Liberty of Peterborough – Bishop SCAMBLER # BURGHLEY
40 an indulgence, 1510
42 Richard Howland, Bishop of Peterborough
47 sonnet : a minster by pale moonlight # c.73
47 manor of Sutton Holland
48 folk lore of fits - gather 9 sixpences from 9 separate married men to make a
ring for me to wear # c.39 # c.21.1
49 Diedrich SONOY, DUTCH man, to fens 1590 - brought Dutchmen to drain his
land
52 LITTLEPORT church notes, from COLE, 1748 ... stands on a hill surrounded
by a very low and deep fen ... windows had ladders on the sides ... in the middle of the rood of
chancel are the arms of see of Ely ... monument; dial plate for CLOCK dated 1745; 1768
inhabitants gave notice resolved to change the day of their FEAST as previously inconvenient
... now Tuesday after 5 Nov and at next will be a show of HEMP
55 VERNATTI family # DUTCH
59 HOLBECH deeds
60 flogging at the cart's tail – Spalding # c.34.6
60 drainage; 1638-49 times out of joint. Wm, 5th Earl Bedford sided with
parliament; father had lost thousands in fens & he meant to complete undertaking under
Pretend Act of 1649; 1651 Parliament ordered 1,000 of Scottish prisoners to be used by
Adventurers, others came from London and York; a forfeit of £10 to be paid for every escape &
monthly certificate of deaths to be returned. 1653 DUTCH prisoners, expert with spade allowed
to work for similar terms; 1653 Bedford writes to Thurloe : The quartering in the villages
where there are no inns and very few alehouses causes the opposition and disturbances where
our works lye. The Dutch prisoners not only refuse to work but are encouraged by the country
people to run away, hiding them in the corn ... and officers who ride after them and bring them
back have no power to punish them. The Adventurers have been very willing to receive the
Dutch prisoners, to free the state from their charge but they are so great a burden and trouble to
them, they being resolved not to work, nor will work, and say they are prisoners of war, and
ought not to be enforced to labour
DENVER : Armstrong says before sluices made there was a fall of 10 feet from the fens to low
water mark. In 1653 Adventurers cut St John's Ea in a straight line for 5 miles from above
Denver to below Stowe bridge ... Denver dam stops up the flow of the tides and the scouring

effect of the ebb tide being lost the Ouse silted up very fast so that 3 years after making St John's Ea it's outfall was choked up and lost and the bridge at Stowe was taken down to save the charge of maintaining it and a road made across it. St John's Ea was of no use till 1666, then the 24 ft drain was cut into it ... start p.64 on EVE

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- 71 UFFINGTON avowson
- 72 'General' Monk – name
- 72 PETERBOROUGH minster – changes 1550s
- 76 BARNACK rag # c.23
- 76* WICKEN FEN fire : smoking visitor thrown lighted match among dry sedge;
nearly 130 acres sedge destroyed to value of £500; now fear will be closed to
entomologists and botanists
- 77 liberty of Peterborough
- 82 auction at BOURNE – boy ran to pub # c.06
- 82 Lincolnshire Lord Mayors of London
- 84 Dean Kipling
- 85 VERNATTI family & p133
- 88 SUTTON GUILD
- 89* Grounde's WEIR, fenmen were fishers and watermen; Benedictine forbad
eating of flesh hence depended on fish for convent kitchens. Eels abundant but
stagnant water of meres did not yield fish of a good flavour, so desire for weirs,
but these interfered with free flow of water - dispute near Wisbech # c. 38 :
fishing
- 91 a monk's hiding-place - THORNEY ABBEY TUNNEL to river - were drains
- 92 Richard Howland, bishop of Peterborough
- 96 Nathaniel Spinkes
- 97 crusaders in Lincolnshire
- 101 Tregonwell FRAMPTON of NEWMARKET
- 102 liberty of Peterborough
- 106 fen birds 300 years ago - DRAYTON POLY-OLBION : extracts re birds of
Lincs & 174 # c.19 # c.73
- 108 the King's SWANS
- 110 the Fishtoft thorn
- 111 roman coins at Deeping
- 111 trespass at HOLBEACH 1769 – killed horses # c.34.6
- 114 MAP makers in fens : Ralph AGAS, 1540-1621, mapped new drains for sewer
commissioners, 1588; describes his work, made birds-eye view of Oxford and
Cambridge 1580 # c.49.9
- 118* REACH described by Cole, 1743 : "a little market town, but now the trade
thereof is lost; account of fair; describes visit 1768 when East wall of chancel
was standing with small part of chancel north and south walls ... so that great
part of what was standing in 1743 is now pulled down; the ditch was made
quite to the water side where barges come up with merchandise; dined with
Crisp Molineux, a West Indian
- 120 the Lincoln imp : Tutivillus
- 122 Richard Reynolds, Bishop of Lincoln
- 123 Levitt family
- 124 BODSEY near RAMSEY
- 127 CASTOR church struck by LIGHTNING, 1795 # c.12.7
- 128 the parish clerk
- 129 Richard Howland, bishop of Peterborough

133 VERNATTI family
 139 liberty of Peterborough - GALLOWS AND GIBBETS : gallows deprived of
 life, Gibbet was hanging in chains after death; 1236 Matthew Paris describes
 two men "one after he was dead was hung upon a gibbet and the other was
 gibbeted alive to perish by pain and hunger. Gibbets erected near spot where a
 crime was committed; one hung in chains in front of widow's house who
 petitioned against "being obliged to view this sight of so miserable an object,
 more terrible than words can express". Condemned man who heard sentence of
 death with tranquillity could not bear thought of being exposed as spectacle to
 the public and their names perpetuated with infamy, so hated visit of workmen
 who came to measure them for the chains. Women were never gibbeted 1752
 Act 25 Geo II authorised judge to order body anatomised or hung in chains;
 PRESS GANGS

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145 BOSTON FLOOD, 1810 - a/c # c.12.5
 146 Elizabeth CROMWELL gravestone, WICKEN church - was this wife or sister
 of Oliver
 147 land at FLEET
 148 land in DEEPING fen
 149 Rev Frederick JACKSON, PARSON DROVE, d.1904 – memories drainage
 150 etymology of WHITTLESEY & p192 # c.48
 151 WISBECH HORSERACE course 1780
 153 MURAGE – tribute to be paid for repairing public walls # c.23
 154 rainfall in fens # c.12.4
 154 PETERBOROUGH corporation – song, 1837 # c.73
 156 GLATTON cum HOLME
 158 John DYER poem on fleece & SHEEP # c.22.5 # c.73
 159 assessment at DEEPING ST JAMES
 160 Gunton's history of PETERBOROUGH church
 162 Mrs Ware's poems
 163 COCKFIGHTING at Peterborough; match 1791, 1792 before banned; after
 banning continued at many out-of-the-way country places
 164 Richard Howland, Bishop of Peterborough
 165* SOHAM WILLS, 1460s, 1500s also ILLUS by A.P. MOORE, 1797 & p.197
 with another pic & plan of church p.201 & p229 # C.44.16
 168 liberty of Peterborough
 174 fen BIRDS 300 years ago # c.19 # DECOY
 180 the abbot of Ramsey and the council of Ferrara, 1431
 181 WESTON hills, Spalding
 182 old fenland deeds – include Gallant of Stretham
 183 DAGENHAM breach – early work of VERMUYDEN # c.29
 186* SPINNEY PRIORY; annexed to monastery of Ely in 1449; after suppression a
 life grant of buildings together with manor and rectory made to George
 Carleton; the old priory house pulled down in 1775. Elizabeth Russell married
 Henry Cromwell, 4th son of Protector; description of lands etc
 188 SPALDING priory
 192 etymology of WHITTLESEY # c.48
 193 DOG IN A DOUBLET sign
 194 Serges in Lincolnshire
 195 Bay Hall Manor, BENNINGTON
 196 Surfleet inscriptions
 197 some early SOHAM wills # c.54.5

- 200 Queen Katern's day – custom for WORKHOUSE children to dress in white #
c.39
- 202* LIBERTY OF ISLE OF ELY; lord of liberty has custody of prisoners but
prison itself is King's pro bono publico & to be repaired at common charge. Act
of William III re repairing county gaols empowers county justices to make a
rate, but does not authorise liberty justices to make a rate, which caused
problems; 1759 Sir C. Yorke considered says if Grand Jury made a
presentment, as they did in 1729 and Justices make a rate for repairs of gaol
then if party refused payment could determine case in Kings Bench court. 1764
Isle Jury remonstrate against sore evil in that suppression of one assize of the
two accustomed to be held within a year and the cruelties exercised towards the
prisoners. His Lordship gave no answer so they lodged petition on subject of
assize in House of Commons, when Lordship gave assurance that afternoon
that two assizes would be held. But prisoners still in difficulties : no provision
and irons intolerable : the subject of picture. These result from ruinous state of
Ely gaol which Bishop declines to repair though is the onus of the See of Ely
and insists that the country repair. The gaols which are repaired by the country
are repaired by county rate but there was no county rate over Isle till 13 Geo II
yet the gaol is Of 700 years standing and originally in the Palace itself

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- 204 STAMFORD DEEBS
- 207 SERGES in Lincolnshire
- 208 WHITTLESEY MERE memories of Joseph Cole; before drainage great trade
done in reed and sedge for thatching, purchasers coming from all over county.
The waggons that came with the reed brought earthenware which sold fenland
inhabitants. Three reed merchants paid £700 a year for fowling, reeding and
fishing rights. Starlings infested the place - millions. A single discharge of a
long fowling gun loaded with shot killed no less than 27 dozen birds. Guns 6-7
feet long ... sledges in regular use. SKATERS could run down pike that could
be seen under clear ice. Would continue for miles till pike exhausted; then
break ice and haul out. Could see EELS on summer day. Large eels had 3 holes
to home in the mud. One was a large one where its head peeped out and two
small ones 2 feet away where the end of the tail would be. Gleaver for eels
looked for these homes before striking with his spear; did not strike for head
because fish too large to pass between blades of glave. So directed it to spot
near two holes and invariably secured fish near tail. Small fish only had one
hole. ADDERS swarmed about margins of lake - abolished by paying 2d for
every one killed. When drained many curious things found. People fixed boards
to their feet to prevent themselves sinking and travelled over surface - found
pewter dishes and earthenware jars and jugs of great size with curious designs.
Found a censer lamp - thought it a snuff box made of silver washed with gold;
was given £25 reward but it later sold for £1,100
- 210 Corrody of Bishop Sutton's esquire 1296
- 211 horse-stealing at Peterborough 1600s
- 212 Northowram register – nonconformists # c.80.03
- 213 Peterborough justices, 17th century
- 215 Heraldic exhibition 1894
- 219 WESTON HILL : a place where something is going to be heaped up
- 211 RAMSEY – a summons to the Abbot to attend in council, 1439
- 222* ELY GAOL, 1800 - case as to a maniac confined in gaol. Gaol should be
repaired by Bishop. 1798 James Thompson was moved to Ely gaol from
Newgate charged with stealing horse at SUTTON, property Joseph Vipan. He

- became insane but then proved not maniac and hanged 1801. Prisoners in gaol
 11 Nov 1800 Wm Topper for transportation, John Youngs & John Lanes for
 stealing a goose, Susanh. Treyford for house breaking - for trial at next assizes.
 2 Irishmen sentenced 12 months for uttering base coin, 1 man 3 months, 1
 woman for debt, 1 man 40 days for debt
 223 WHITTLESEY notebook from farmer, 1780-1798 - includes making road,
 bridge, first quarter sessions
 228 'The windy clanging of the Minster CLOCK' – Peterborough
 228 CROWLAND retaken by parliamentary forces # c.45.2
 229 some early SOHAM wills # c.54.5

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- 232 drainage of Gt Level ...Earl of Bedford and his participants and adventurers had
 sunk money into scheme & heirs rallied in 1660 to assert the rights and
 privileges granted by the charter of King Charles I to their predecessors. At
 restoration in 1660 necessary maintenance work of draining was authorised by
 two temporary Acts. A commission of sewers was issued - Earl of Portland,
 Lord Georges, Robert Phillips and Samuel FORTREY and commons resolved
 that all the parties dispossessed, claiming under Francis Bedford, are vested
 into actual seizing and possession of their respective shares and lots &
 constituted Conservators of the Level. Commission of sewers kept works going
 until General Drainage Act in 1663. During interval many claims and offers
 made for the "Kings part" & lively contest between Old and New Adventurers
 about adjustment of their accounts ... Surveyor General suggested figures ...
 Lord Bellasis offer of £1,500 pa accepted

King desired to get the fen business out of the way. Earl of Bedford had been of
 great service Chas II at restoration pressed King to support him to bear the
 burden of drainage projects in which his father before him had sunk great sums.
 , King's speech 1661; New Adventurers accounts 1662 - for money expended
 for draining and improvements of lands purchased for non-payment of taxes
 since May 1649; 26 Mar 1653 level south of Bedford river adjudged drained &
 taxes paid from 26 Mar 1651

Old Adventurers, or partly dispossessed put in answer - books showed that
 somebody had received taxes and spent money but if on drainage or not who
 knows. Had also been buyers and sellers at same time. They had sold 2,700
 acres of Sir Miles SANDYS land for non-payment of £843 tax to Thos Bales, a
 mere nominee, 2,000 acres of which land soon after the counterfeit sale was
 sold by Mr Henley to Mr Trenchard for £5,000. Where's the surplus? New
 Adventurers retorted that Sir Miles was a committee man and principal actor in
 procuring the Rump Act & joined in conveyance of 7,000 acres of his land.
 Considering troubled times it not easy to justify the great expectations of the
 New Adventurers. Petition presented parliament to disannul the "Pretended
 Act" and pacify the country by a happy composure by swallowing up the
 accounts in oblivion

Sir Miles SANDYS sen Deputy Governor 1653. His brother Colonel Sandys
 was governor of Worcester. His property lay about Willingham. In 1630 he
 stopped an ancient sewer that flooded Over fen and "when the commoners
 sought to make known the same unto him Sir Miles would not permit us to
 speak but commandeth us to be gon, or else he would make a proclamation and

commit us by which means we were compelled to part and were not heard.. Sir Miles jun of Wilburton is described as "one who gave his life to the great work of the level

1611 marriage Miles Sandys of Wilburton, esq., son of Sir Miles and Eliz. daughter of Thos Parke of Wisbech St Peter, gent

Sandys cut which formed part of Col Will. Dobson's design is named after the Colonel. It was 3 miles long from Ely to Littleport chair. Sir Miles had owned 10,000 acres and expended £41,000 about them and paid in taxes £6,250

- 239 SOHAM MERE print by Carle Vernet - no trace of it; view may be Soham
mere or a portion of Soham fen 4-5 miles away
240 horse-stealing at Peterborough 1781

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- 243 ST NEOT'S body translated to CROWLAND ABBEY
244 local government of PETERBOROUGH
246 gild of St Mary, BOSTON
249 Washingborough deed
251* COVENEY notes from BM mss. : a poor mean church consisting square tower,
very old at west end ... 2 bells, a nave and chancel which are thatched. Ground
consists entirely of pasture ground, there being not an acre of arable in parish
(1747); on ceiling "this church was beautified Aug 1776. It is about five miles
across the fen to Manea hamlet and about ten miles by Mepal which is the
common way on horseback
256* ELY in 1681, described by Thomas Baskerville. "from Mildenhall we went the
bank way through the depth and level of the fens, a great part of the way being
by the river side, it being May 1681 after a dry winter and scorching dry spring
or else it had hardly been possible so early, and as dry as it was we could hardly
get over the rotten bridges with our horses, being glad to alight for fear they
should break through and tick in the rotten bogs under them, but they have
another way to go thither in the winter, something further about. The level from
Mildenhall to Ely being nothing but turf or peat it is by its insufferable heat and
dryth having exhausted all the moisture out of the ditches it was so suffocating
hot by means of the brimstone or sulphury vapours, we could hardly breathe or
endure it, so that I generally think it was possible to have set the country on
fire, the earth then so dry. As we rode along this bank we saw here and there
some poor cottages and wretched farms where some poor souls, at a hard rate,
do weather out a winter to look after the cattle that feed here. But doubtless
here his incomparable fowling to make those amends that will undertake that
pleasant toil, for the red-shanks and other birds were very tame and not afraid
of us. Here is also good snaring of Jacks, for one saw an abundance for two
miles riding in the ditches on this side of the town of Ely

At nine miles distance from Mildenhall, this bank winding about the river and
not made a direct line towards Ely, we came at length to a place where this and
another river met. Here on an old high wooden bridge we went over Mildenhall
river, where were 2 or 3 ale houses for boatmen to refresh themselves, and
about a bow shot below this bridge the two rivers met viz: - that of Cam and
Ouse united below Cambridge and this of Mildenhall. From these ale houses it
is accounted 3 or four miles to Ely, the way thither as before, lying in a bank of

earth with estuaries on both sides, as most of the fens are, save what they allow at large for the way itself, where here and there poor men that have no land do dig turf or peat for fuel to burn. In this passage between ale houses and Ely bridge it was we saw so many jacks swimming in the ditches, between the highway and the inclosures. At the bridge, which lies about half a mile below the town we came into the winter way or grand road which comes from London and the country adjacent to Ely. On this bridge, it now being the time of washing sheep, was sheep to be washed. The bridge on which they stood was high, it may be 10 or 12 yards above the water, and from thence they were tumbled into the river within the compass of a frame of fir poles to keep them from swimming away till such time as they were cleansed by the washer. The men, as I suppose, stood on a boat sunk in the water middle high, for the water was deep where the sheep fell, and which being thoroughly washed, they lifted them over the frame and so they swam ashore

The cathedral is in the plane of a hill, but one street extends down almost to the bridge. The buildings are very indifferent but the cathedral is very noble. Over the choir there is a large round full of lights or windows mounting perhaps 20 yards above the body of the Church. The inside of it is very well repaired for the body is lately paved. There is one small Church more in the town and little else to be said of other buildings

The great trade here about is making of bricks and earthenware, for which purpose they have excellent sorts of earth. Been at Stourbridge fair I saw vast quantities of earthenware there spread on the turf, of all sorts to be sold, brought out of these parts

258 stone from Ramsey abbey used for Corpus Christi college, Kings and Trinity whose bursar rode to RAMSEY to superintend in person the destruction of part of the church

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259 a rector of LEVERINGTON - Eyre
 260 SOHAM church – view
 261 SOHAM church - Cole's note
 262 drainage of Gt Level the decree of Commissioner of Sewers at St Ives adjudging that Great Level drained was fortified by sitting at Peterborough in June 1660 declaring that all water pits, meres, swamps to be heritage of Earl of Bedford. A parching summer and fen mirage may account for the illusion that marshes had become meadows or pastures and that instead of flights of water-fowl were to be seen herds of cattle. Vested interests and a desire to oust the Roundheads lured the Old Adventurers to their ruin. Within these watery limits a rank growth of root and weeds had spring up, which for many a year had mocked the fenman's toil.. General Drainage act gave truce to battle of finance. Three Chief Justices of Kings Court were constituted Commissioners to determine differences between Old Adventurers and New "who do pretend to have laid out and disbursed for taxes towards maintenance and repair ... more monies that the rents and profits have amounted to since the conveyances were first taken. William, son of Francis Earl of Bedford - whose interests springing under Royal Charter or Pretended Act were in direct conflict - and his adventurers were created the Company of Conservators of the Great Level of the Fens ... with power to tax all 95,000 acres for preservation of the Level. Leaving out King's 10,000 & 2,000 for Earl of Portland the rest were vented in Corporation together with all ways, new rivers, cuts, drains, banks and forelands

Corporation were empowered to act as Commissioners of sewers throughout the Gt Level and to employ sergeants to summon juries and execute any process and further to use and exercise laws and customs and appoint such officers ... They were elected annually at Shire Hall, Ely, by majority of electors. Ownership of 400 acres qualified for office of Governor or bailiff, 200 for conservator. Only those who owned 100 acres had voice at election. Taxes varied - 4d per acre on worst land, highest 3s.4d.. In 1671 all land taxed at 3s.4d. When tax in arrears land sold by auction but land would go at no price and Corporation had to pay way out of their own purses. Continued till 1776 when authorised to sell forfeit lands for any price.

DENVER sluice with 3 waterways of 20ft each occasioned much contention. In 1662 when New Bedford cut a sluice placed at Hermitage, Earith; replaced in 1826 by new sluice and cast-iron bridge. This kept water from flowing down old channel of river and protect South Level from flooding in winter; but New river lying at higher level than Ouse at Denver the water from Earith fell into the Ouse - hence Denver Sluice. When land floods rushed down New Bedford they closed gates of sluice and the tide waters being shut out they dropped silt and choked up the channel. To save South Level St John's Eau was cut but that silted up in three years and remained till 1666 when 24ft drain from Soham Mere was cut and tunnelled under the rivers. In 1745 Mr Labelye reported the ill-designed sluice without any lock was the ruin of the navigation. Lieut-Col Dodson, employed with Vermuyden seems to have suggested Denver Sluice. He advocated the cutting of new rivers and use of sluices instead of banks. Light moor banks had always failed and gault was not procurable. It was he who devised drain from SOHAM MERE to St John's Eau, "so that this mere shall never come within 4 foot of its former heights in ordinary floods"

Old Fen sluices were intended to facilitate drainage; navigation was not within scope of authorities and sluices necessary to expedite flow of water to outfall. Old Bedford and Salter's Lode sluices, built when Old Bedford cut in 1630 were re-built in 1828

Mills or engines had been planted here and there by Company but not until 1678 Corporation resolved to employ them : "for better and speedier cleansing of drains the four surveyors of the level do buy each of them a mill made for that purpose. But little used in C17 and no proprietor had right to erect one for private use. In 1699 Greens Mill at Chatteris was presented as a common nuisance and its demolition ordered

Corporation went too far. New drains and banks vested in them but not ancient banks or drainage works and failed in a suit against Will Hyde, lord of Sutton, who set up an engine to cast water at Shire drain, Lincs.

268 SEDAN CHAIRS at Peterborough used in 1860s; near Kimbolton clergyman used old Sedan chair to bring infirm parishioners to church

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270 Rev Sydney Smith
 270 Peterborough old screen
 271 local government of PETERBOROUGH
 276 TYDD ST GILES church notes - Cole
 281 SOHAM notes from various sources; 1047 S Edmund, King and Confessor gave to church of Ramsey the market of Soham; Edmund appeared to a peasant at Exning and revealed his wish to see a road made for the benefit of pilgrims from St Etheldreda, Ely to St Edmund's Bury & monks made Soham causeway in consequence
 288 The Cambridgeshire & Lincolnshire FENS

293 Drainage of Gt Level - Corporation never solvent. In 1673 Gt Level was drowned and cattle removed to upland; no tenants would pay rent for adventurers land so large expenditure on permanent works to remedy breaches had to come from Conservators' pockets - so they borrowed. The Duke of Bedford the only asset of Corporation estate, his loans proceeded more from his graciousness than commercial sagacity. The Duke's debt waxed and the prosperity of Level waned; the poverty of inhabitants increased as commons were divided. The majority were in receipt of "relief" and to relive their wants the Inclosure Prevention Act 1685 was passed; but where was feed for cows of the cottagers, the very hassocks were rotten

300 North Level remedies & impoverishment

301 alleged idolatry

CIVIL WAR in Isle; Col Valentine Wauton (or Walton) writes: 21 June 1648 : design of enemy upon Isle of Ely, a place of that concealment that if possessed by an enemy where they might head a considerable army with all provision for horse and man at their pleasure. He settled at Kings Lynn where repairing works. I spent the last week in putting the Isle of Ely into a posture of defence. I viewed all the passages into the Isle and caused breast works to be made upon every pass, and all great boats on the fresh rivers to be secured under our guards. I summoned in the auxiliary forces who made a good appearance, about 400 men, the captain and officers honest, ready on all occasions to serve the public but have spent upon their own estates all this war. I conceive if some course were taken for their further encouragement to be paid the days they shall exercise their men on, and drawn forth to defend their frontiers, the charge is not considerable, they having no field officers. The ordinary soldiers are tractable and willing to serve the Commonwealth if they might receive their just pay from those that find the armies who are much in arrears for former service. So that I was forced to send forth warrants for their speedy payment. I am setting forward to put the North part of the Isle into a posture, those that may be trusted. But generally they are disaffected as Wisbech, March and Whittlesey whom I propose to disarm and to arm honest men if they may be found. Colonel Hubbert and Lieutenant Colonel Dimond are the only men for the parliament, but over powered with malignants. I cannot see how that part of the Isle can be secured without a troop of horse upon their frontiers. Crowland and Whittlesey works are much decayed and part of Whittlesey fort not finished that if any enemy should rise within they cannot defend themselves against them, but for want of money they are not made so defensible as they might be. I had 40 barrels of powder, match and bullet proportionable lately from the committee of the army, which sends apace, being dispersed to Ely, Whittlesey, Crowland and Boston and 4 Lynn Guards, so that if there should be any sudden occasion I know not from whence we could be timely supplied. I have no means to send out a scout for intelligence but out of my own purse, that any enemy may come under the works for notice can be taken. I desire that ammunition may be with speed sent and those other things taken into consideration, the soldiers have great want of swords, not one hundred in my regiment, also drums, about 12 wanting. They have not been recruited these

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three or four years

302 WHITTLESEY MERE in the 17th century

303 TROKENHOLT, Whittlesey

304 Devil's ditch, Newmarket

305 EYE notes

306 'Trespass' at Fishtoft, Friskney & Skirbeck

308 rainfall in fens

308 early Ely will, 1458
 309 Liberty of Isle of Ely : Abbots and Bishops after 1109 had to maintain a gaol. Prisoners were starved, whipped and tormented but not fettered unless by express licence of King. Prisoners in Dr Mawson's time fettered because of ruinous state of prison and Bishop reluctant to rebuild in case charge should attach to his successors. Drawing sent to Privy Council is missing but John Howard preserved copy. Remonstrance of grand Jury, 1764 to James Foster, Chief Justice of Isle of Ely. Inhabitants long endured much suffering from corrupt administration ... The Prince of this Isle, as our King, has no fault, so our prelate governs by a council and they alone are answerable ... we look no further than incident which fell out in the parish of Littleport within these last few years ... Demand a gaol delivery twice in a year ...
 Bishop returned no answer so petition to Privy Council when Bishop says exaggerated - if prisoners loaded with heavier irons than necessary to prevent escape he not bound to keep gaol in repair as never repaired by any of his predecessors; no proof he bound to repair gaol. Claim that Bishop made £500 a year clear profit : a shameful assertion. Dr Mawson rather than continue contention submitted and repaired the gaol until secular jurisdiction abolished under Liberties Act of 1836. Since that time a Commission of Peace, separate from the Shire, has been issued for Isle of Ely and prisoners imprisoned at Cambridge gaol
 313 Blubber-house point
 313 the BLIND HOLBEACH watchmaker
 315 'The Nene' – publication # c.05
 316 Local government of PETERBOROUGH
 320 ancient idolatry
 320 LYNN in 1732
 324 booksellers in the fenland

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325 SOHAM church pewheads
 325 local government of PETERBOROUGH
 328 Social amenities – DUEL at STILTON
 329 'Sunday no Sabbath' – Peterborough sermon # c.87
 332 TYDD ST GILES church notes – COLE
 337 corn prices in KESTEVEN 1608
 338 WILL OF Ralph Peirson of THORNEY 1680s
 340 SWANS & SWAN MARKS ON THE Witham
 342 PETERBOROUGH INCLOSURE, 1812
 344 SUTTON church notes – COLE, 1745; in 1634 plough turned up thin plate of lead with ancient coins & 3 silver plates together with gold rings supposed to be treasure of some noble person who in time of war had retired to fen country for safety
 347 INDULGENCES in Bishop of Ely registers; includes 1487 for repair of chapel of B.V.M. on bridge at BRANDON ferry
 348 salt pits at Fleet
 349 CAR DYKE
 350 monogram at Marholm
 351 St Guthlac's swallows – poem # c.73
 352 Hornbling and Billingham deed
 352 Boston corporation plate

drainage : there were some districts which were so situated that no comprehensive scheme could cope with their hyper-saturated condition. The owners in HADDENHAM district petitioned parliament in 1726 & occasioned the first private district act. Level had been under water for 7 years and could only be drained by lifting and throwing water over banks by mills. Mr James FORTREY stated whole district 6,500 acres was drowned two feet deep; there was no outfall to draw it, the bed of the adjoining rivers lying higher than the land. Sutton at that time 4 feet under water. Average rent was 2s.6d. per acre, when drained it was 20s. Benefits from act developed slowly. In 1773 Wm Cole wrote "I have a manor in this parish called Hall's which descended to me from my father William Cole in 1765. I sold it about 1771 it having been drained then 14 or 15 years. I could get no rent and had to pay the taxes". The windmill was as uncertain as the weather. These private districts are laid out with sub division drains for each ownership to a main drain cut at common charge. This mill drain is embanked and terminates in the outfall river. There the mill is erected or two if necessary to work as double-lift. But the rivers could neither retain the water nor carry it away. In 1782 "the country is in as perilous situation as ever but without any breach of the bank the lands are overflowed from the soak form the rivers for want of a proper conveyance of water. Had the general outfall been attended to and 1/10th part of the money spent which had been laid out in mills and banks the country would have been saved. All we can do is to increase the powers of the engine and raise the banks still higher and let what will happen"

Navigation Commissioners never paid their way. C1810 First Middle Level Rivers Act, Barrier Bank Acts were passed authorising a general tax to enable the heightening and strengthening Old Bedford Bank. Toll paid on bridges erected in lieu of ancient ferries at Earith ... Expenditure on banks had run away with money : they were always sinking. The carriage of gault for water-proofing the banks was so costly. In 1844 Second Middle Level Acts confirmed powers to execute works which have effectively drained the Level. The Old Bedford, 40-Foot and Counter Wash Drain were deepened with new cuts

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MOORE map of Meres

drainage : 1841 Middle Level loss of crops and cattle by floods; WHITTLESEY MERE drained; RAMSEY mere drained few years earlier. 1862 Middle and South Levels finally separated by operation of Middle Level Act 1862. From early times the South Level has been more subject to drowning than other divisions. Since Westwater from Earith to Chatteris Ferry became choked Level has been surcharged with upland waters & New Bedford which eased St Ives made things worse for land from Hermitage to Harrimere . All towns in revolt. St John's Eau was soon choked and the tunnel drain made in 1666 soon ceased to keep Soham Mere dry; even Sandys Cut injured navigation so much from Ely to Littleport that rivers to Mildenhall, Brandon & Thetford became useless. Before Denver Sluice Thetford and Brandon gained livelihood by water traffic. The old drains in this level, Sam's Cut and Wicken Drain which carried upland water to the Ouse were not embanked. Nothing could avail but banking the cuts and dividing the Level for drainage purposes into an upper and lower division. More than 20 Acts regulated drainage before the South Level Act of 1827 passed. The Middle Fen District was one of largest and Burn Fen divided into two districts. In 1766 drainage of 7,000 acres between Cam and uplands of Bottisham was effected by Commissioners invested with powers to tax, cut lodes, erect engines and

staunches and licence occupants to erect hose mills. In 1778 gangs of barges were landed at PRICKWILLOW and had to beach on the bed of the Ouse till water came down. Surveyors blamed Denver Sluice whose dam laid 8 feet higher than bottom of Ouse but nothing could be done till South Level embanked. 1806 Act for draining fens between Brandon River and Sam's Cut. By South Level Act of 1827 authorised make new Cut from Ouse at end of Sandy's cut and thence to Sandhill End, another cut across to Littleport Bridge and a new cut for the river Lark from Prickwillow to Sandys cut. Commissioners could tax and take tolls on merchandise passing up rivers. Thus authority of Corporation was superseded in regard to 3rd division of Great Level Centrifugal pump proved mightier than rivers had purged this watery land. Windmill was uncertain. Objects drainage to make peat fruitful and can only be done by means which enable farmers to gauge the water in drains so that it keeps the sub-soil moist within a few inches of the roots of the crops. A few "engines" are still in use, the abodes of sluice keepers. Of all the weary loads that penury can lay on a man the worse of all must be to live on cheese and garlic in a mill (1906). That fearful and pestilential canopy of vapours which hung over fenland in 17th century has left not a rack behind, and mist seldom smothers up the beauty of the land. The fenman, erst the shrinking slave of winter wading from islet to islet, sucking up infection from the spongy air is now hot summers sauling and journeys from farm to farm on the hard high roads, breathing a balmy breeze sweet with the scent of many flowers - L. Gaches

- 362 CAR DYKE
- 365 SPALDING weather lore # c.12 # c.39
- 367 THORNEY abbey demolition
- 369 Stamford mint # c.42

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- 372 fen abbey manuscripts
- 373 Peterborough silver token
- 373 Peterborough organ screen
- 375 stone from the foundations of the old wooden bridge at Peterborough
- 375 corn prices in Lincolnshire 1801
- 376 looms
- 377 Fytton Hall cantry
- 380 Littlebury effigy at HOLBEACH
- 382 nine an indefinite number
- 383 local government at PETERBOROUGH
- 387 CROWLAND and Cambridge
- 388 1217 ELY burnt – Walter Bunk with his Brabanters destroyed the town and Isle of Ely and almost burnt the Minster therein

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- 1* civil war, Peterborough
7 Thorney picture, election of abbot
11* description fens 1761 - drowned, DECOYS
16* WICKEN FEN, 1906 - pot hunters & trippers used to destroy eggs,, shoot every bird, now Mr Verrall to keep it free from spoilers
17* corruption at parliamentary election Isle, 1654 - George GLAPTHORNE, Sheriff ineligible, swearer, - petitions but kept seat # c.33.3
21* UPWARE inn - Tom Appleby had it renovated c1850 - Society of Idiots & Honourable Company of Beersoakers
26 CAR DYKE
29 landscape of fens - every farm set out into 40 fenced inclosures for most part fringed with lofty elms ... eye bounded by next hedgerow; in 1871 John Hampden wagered £500 in support theory of flatness of earth ... ocular experiment on Ouse between Salters Lode & Maudlin bridges - 6 mile straight stretch water ... referee adjudged in favour round
36* DECOYS - Defoe's description Lincs fens
47 Briefs ...ELY fire 1685
48 BLUBBERHOUSE CORNER on OUSE between Denver & Lynn
50* UPWARE - one amusement to place fen punt at right angle to shore, just ground & then take short run & carry boat across river; propelled by SPREAD - terminates in forked piece of wood each point shod with extinguisher shaped iron & wooden shoulder bolted on pole to prevent it sinking into mud; quant has round turned piece of hard wood at top while spread has cross piece which can be used as hook to catch hold of posts and convenient for hooking ropes out of water; a spread of this pattern which "Royal Ferryman" at Upware bore on sleeve his jersey
51 WALDRAM HALL marks northern limit of Great Level
53 WALTHEOF connected fens 1066
59 French CARTHUSIANS acquired property between Ely & Peterborough c.1905
62 Commissioner of SEWERS notes for Isle in Spalding Gentleman's Library
74 READ FAMILY pedigree (Lincs)
75* DOWNHAM in 1714 Thomas Jones presented rector ... more a farmer than clergyman being involved in great undertakings in fens, married 2nd time, having numerous brood by first wife, one at Clare. Some time before his death resigned and his son Thomas instituted. Thos elder married one of name of King by whom several s=children; 2nd wife with small fortune form Chelsea to whom Mr Thomas of Stretham left £100 and as Jones his executors he married her and ruined her, for within 2 or 3 years by his adventurous dealings in fen farms & now in Fleet Prison. Some creditors to sequester the livings of Downham as Jones indebted above £38,000 - 1777f
83 notes from Chronica Majora of Matthew Paris, died 1259
1071 Earls Edwin, Morcar and Siward rebel against William ... seek refuge Ely & build wooden fortress called Hereward's fortress; King makes roads and bridges, renders deep swamps passable for man and beast and builds castle at Wisbech. Edwin and Morcar were brothers of Hereward, taken prisoners when Ely surrendered but lives spared
1109 abbey church at Ely made a cathedral
1165 earthquake in Isle, Norfolk & Suffolk which knocked man down & cause bells to ring
1216 Louis, son of King of France ravages East Anglia

1216 Isle laid waste by Walter Bue and the Brabancons & by Earl of Salisbury; thrice the came over by Stuntney; with drawn swords they entered cathedral and Prior only saved place being burnt by payment of 209 marks. Much cruelty and extortion was practiced. Some soldiers and other man taken. The richer and nobler of soliders made escape over the ice; others captured, their horses being worn out

1216 King John, after ravaging Norfolk and Suffolk goes to Peterborough, Crowland and Lynn; loses baggage in Wash

1252 dedication of church at Ely by Bishop Hugh Northwold, in presence of King Henry III

1256 dispute between Bishop of Ely and Abbot of Ramsey with regard respective boundaries in fen brough to amiable conclusion. Formerly fens were inaccessible, there were no dwellings, no foothold for man nor beast; only sedge, deep beds of mud, marshy thickets of reeds, the homes of birds, not to speak of demons ... but now all is converted into delightful meadow land and arable ground; and land that cannot produce corn or hay is utilised for turf and other fuel

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- 91 WITCHCRAFT - horse shoes - found or stolen, fixed to door stable prevents witches; carpenter at Ely named Bartingale feared woman named Gotobed has bewitched him
- 92 MILITIA rates for Isle : 1595 Dean Ely makes rate for raising no of horse and foot; 1609 another rate of horse, foot and armour - 36 horsemen, 67 footmen; it said that the small vicarages which are joined together to furnish a pike, used to be charged severally to furnish a Bill-man, but that service not now being accounted of the charge is altered; following benefices not charged at all in this rate : Wilburton. account mentions that livings much impaired by great decay of saffron ground the last great frosty winter 1607 ... following not charged ... Haddenham, Stuntney, Wilburton
- 93 1565 Privy Council authorise commissioners to stay and prohibit shipping from carrying out of the ports and creeks within Isle any corn, grain and other victual. It was feared that England likely t suffer from a scarcity of corn and Corn Sessions held throughout the land. Survey shipping in Isle shows navigation fens never been very prosperous; was not a corn producing district and cattle and sheep driven to uplands in winter; were no roads soundly mode of transit for burdens by rivers and lodes. Navigation of Ouse so unprofitable that grantee of tolls of upper part of river has been recently tempted to convey to a pauper to make himself invulnerable to rating authorities. Population of Ely in 1566 about 1,700; shipping consisted of a few keels, lighters and barges. There is one creek at Ely which is a landing place and there is a common passage by the fresh water for the carriage of grain toward the seas ... mentions March and another nearer the sea. All landing places are governaunce of Bishop. In Ely are three barges, one belonging Thomas Archer of 6 cart load burden, another belonging Eichard Love of 8 cart load, third to John Thompson, 8 carts. 8 people get living with same carrying grain to Lynn # c.26.3
- 99 FUNERAL procession conveys right of way ... - not funeral but the public procession; so landowners charge nominal sum
- 101 BARGES still travel through fens; previously called Lightermen and dressed in sleeved waistcoats of blue or red plush and wore fur caps; several of riverside pubs where used to bait horse had blackboard with bargees names painted down side leaving space to note amount of beer consumed; lighters carried

pickle tub like ship at sea, gentle movement of lighters worked salt into meat. They cooked and ate meals on board the "house" lighter, sitting on the deck. No beer carried on board nor drunk during meal, at close adjourned to public house, At that time all fires in Cambridge lighted with sedge brought from Wicken fen in small "fen boats" which also bought peat - were small and could float anywhere

BANHAM told of getting full-sized 20-ton lighters up to Bedford or Northampton; in dry seasons they were scraping along the bottom so sometimes made dam by sinking the horse boat across the river and extending tarpaulins to hold up the water. Then when it gathered could drag lighters one at a time by several horses.

Lightermen a distinct caste because lived and worked apart from fellows & worked while other rested. Have seen gang pass entire day lolling at ease with infinite beer outside Pike and Eel at Baitsbite while lighters loaded with "fossils" - coprolites; then in evening started to Lynn. Lightering trade was moribund because railway carried good more cheaply but "waterworks" took a new lease of life about 1860 when CORPORALITE industry started. They also staved off ruin from many landowners who had been affected by Free Trade Work done at night and off hours because of tides at Denver. Encouraged horses by peculiar chant which began with deep note and consisted of constant repetition of higher one, so long as performer's breath held out. It finished with mournful wail on two notes

DENVER SLUIDE the point where quiet water ended and tidal waters began. Any man could attach horses to boat and navigate in quiet water but farm more skill needed in tideway. Peculiar difficulty to get through ruinous old timber bridges. The horse could not walk though time - the bow line had to be taken in and put out again on other side of bridge, so motive power failed just when needed most. The gang had to draw alongside the bank and a line made fast to a post from the sternmost lighter to ease them through. Sometimes during spring tides water so high there was not headroom under bridges and have to wait till next tide. At every bridge enormously heavy mast would have to be lowered and set up again. It had two blocks at the very top. These were only used on the tideway where gangs generally used three horses, two on one bank and one on other where width of river permitted. This work managed by special class called "berthmen" who steered and gave orders. These man, paid 10/- a trip lived in tap room of Jenyns Arms or at another pub below sluice where poker chained to fireplace either prevent fights to save being stolen. Some slept in wooden pumping windmills near sluice, others in lightermen's room or hayloft When gang on the move the regular allowance at ordinary stopping places was, for the small boy or apprentice 1/2 a pint; for the bigger boy and horse keeper one pint each; and for the principal man, one quart. For places where they stayed some days and took and discharged cargo the amount per day was for small boy 1 1/2 pints, 3 pints for big boy and 3 quarts for man. Any beer beyond this they had to pay for. The amount of manoeuvring at Lynn before the building of the docks and introduction of steam tugs was very great. Just above Lynn the river Nar enters Ouse, forming the town moat. Beyond this horses could not be used and gangs had to be poled along if the bottom was within reach, or lines had to be taken out to bouts etc. The dock too was used by many gangs who had to pass along the whole length of the river front of the town, generally in a desperate hurry lest the tide should turn before they got to the entrance For the upward journey was essential to start at dead low water or little before so as to carry the whole tide with them sometimes as far as to Earith and also to get through the bridges at St German's and St Mary Magdalene before tide rose too high. The horses in this case had to wait above the mouth of the river Nar at the very edge of the water, down the steep bank. I have seen a horse roll down

here and lie on his back in the mud, kicking all four feet in the air. It was very hard work for the horses because the gang had to move faster than the tide or it could not be steered. Also at frequent intervals along the towing path - the haling-way there are jumps - wooden fences to keep cattle from straying and over these the horses would have to jump, encouraged by full-throated chorus from the lighters. The horse must pull hard up to the jump and then stand still for a few moments till his towing lines comes slack or he cannot get over; some horses are slow to learn this.

I first made voyage from Denver Sluice to Lynn by water - cannot remember any boats anchored permanently in tideway, but in the 1890s there were at least a dozen half-decked boats anchored in the very middle, very much in the way. They are used to catch smelts which come up river at certain times; a "stow net" such as used at sea for sprats is extended on a triangle of spars. I was amused one day to see a man on bank who wanted to go on board his smelt boat. He got into a little boat just where the green turf leaves off and the precipice of slimy mud begins. He rocked the little boat about, pushing with small scull over the side and shot down some 25 feet into the water at the bottom. He would have to wait till at least high water before he could get back again

Region between Denver and Lynn is MARSHLAND. Sturgeon frequently come to Sluice - Aubrey Steward

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- 109 Sir Edward PEYTON of Isleham offered £10,000 or £500 a year not to oppose
- the Bill of the fens in parliament, by Earl of Bedford - refused
- 115 account of lands granted King BEDFORD LEVEL - 12,000 acres; 10,000
- seized by state and sold for benefit of commonwealth; soon after CHARLES II
- restored he reclaimed them and granted to Duke of York then to Queen Mary of
- Modena; granted by KING WILLIAM to Arthur, Earl of Torrington and on his
- death sold
- 122 TOURNAMENTS BANNED AT NEWMARKET, 1309, 1313 when pubic
- proclamation had been made - sergeant at Arms to inhibit Barons and Knights
- from coming Newmarket and any disobey with horse and armour to be
- imprisoned
- 127 1907 Cole Ambrose in ISLEHAM fen came upon bed of ancient river with
- impression of large boat; all round scattered ROMAN pottery & animal skulls
- 137 LEVERINGTON church notes - COLE
- 153 fen crops : amazing crops of sole seed may be seen 4 feet high, unrivalled for
- feeding sheep; potatoes grown before 1790 for home consumption. On peat
- potato ousts wheat which cannot flourish with latent mineral ingredients of 2.9;
- on skirtland what grows well but has a coarse thick skin so runs to bran in the
- mill. Oats do well in a wet season. Cattle are few and sheep rarely flourish on a
- vegetable soil; the lambs suffer from rickets and the "yeos" from shoulder
- weakness. The grass contains too much coltsfoot for them and too much ground
- ivy for horses. Grass does not root deep enough to resist the snatching bite of
- cattle. Flax is an old fen favourite. The farm hands in summer earn about
- 1s.10d a day so they said 1884. Profits of farmer not pocketed by landlords #
- c.22
- 162 fen folk say was practice of old in fens to keep the town shears in the parish
- church. Commissioners of sewers complained those whose duty it was to rook,
- hook, haffe, rode and cleanse rivers from weeds regarded their own private
- profit more than public convenience. In 1619 decreed that river OUSE from St

- Ives to Littleport should be sufficiently roded, cleansed and weeds landed and all rushbeds cut up and taken away three times every year. And every town shall be provided of one pair of strong substantial sharp and well-edged iron shears containing 12 foot distance between the points to perform work
- 171 LEVERINGTON - more COLE notes
- 179* ALDRETH BRIDGE ... charge maintaining it on Manor of HADDENHAM since Etheldreda; abbots repaired and bishops upheld fabric till 1599 when Bishop Martin Heaton surrendered manor of Haddenham to Queen. Manor with farms, windmill, fishing, toll of Earith causeway .. tenements ... are of annual value of £50 excluding the annual charge of £40 for repair of fabric of bridges & causeways at Earith and Aldreth. In 1602 manor granted to Thomas, Lord Howard of Arundel who covenanted to indemnify crown from liability uphold bridge. Commission of Sewers decree refers to cutting of sewer next southward from the place where the Great Bridge lately stood. Nor was it up in 1638. Wells says bridge repaired by men of Haddenham. Owners constantly neglected bridge. Repair of causeway cast on whole Isle, not merely Isle of Ely - in 1667 charged Whittlesey, also Leverington
- 184 LEVERINGTON parish accounts & p203
- 193 complaint by Cambridge watermen of charges and restrictions levied by Kings Lynn merchants
- 212 HOLME FEN soil subsidence - section subsoil taken 1850 when Mere engine built
- 220 WILDFOWLING : death Henry Pickering, aged 90 at Cowbit; one of few representatives left of hardy fen fishermen and gunners. For 60 years had shot on wash; creeping up to flock of wild duck on one occasion he let fly with a muzzle loader and bagged 21 at single discharge. With another shot he killed at one time 8 wild swans and in Bourne fen shot 42 green plovers in one night. Used to be 12 duck decoy in Cowbit Wash yielding in ordinary season 5,000 birds for London. In spring he gathered buckets of wild fowls' eggs and at other times took quantity of ell, pike and tench # c.38 : wildfowling

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- 223 CANUTE in fens : Knute's ditch most ancient public work of known origin in England was navigable drain connecting Peterborough with the Nene near Ramsey. Cut in straight line from Horsey Hill to Bodsey it enabled vessels to cross the fens and avoid dangerous shallows of Whittlesey Mere. Its site forms boundary between Cambs and Hunts was then boundary of waters. It was Canute who ordered fens to be parcelled out to towns, the pasturage to be enjoyed in common, horn by horn and no town to dig or mow in the fen of another. He visited Ely Minster with Queen Emma to hear monks sing
- 228 CHARE FEN - origin name - as at Stretham; in one place chair means a narrow passage between houses
- 245 CHARE FEN - may be CHAIN at Littleport as farm from which artificial cut starts to join Gt Ouse to Lt Ouse is called "Chain Farm"; house stands on ancient foundations at what called PRIESTS HOUSES. it might be chain across river to collect tolls; used to be one across Cam at UPWARE and one a little way above Ely # c.26.3 # OUSE
- 247 LEVERINGTON parish accounts & p271, p.29
- 261 CROWLAND BRIDGE & p.293
- 267 DOWNHAM - COLE notes
- 286 BISHOP MORTON notes on
- 308 RAMSEY ABBEY chronology

Sir John Maynard's "Picklock" - rare pamphlet arguments against fen drainage C17, Lincs, 1650 ...commissioned empanelled a jury who found level not hurtfully surrounded but Sir Wm Killagrew would not be advised but built a fair house on another folks lands and fortified it with men, ammunition and artillery in warlike manner and entertain French and Dutch. et country would never yield possession but always opposed him - were imprisoned, some wounded and affrighted with mastiff-dogs; many utterly undone and wearied out and forced to subscribe ... old jury set aside commissioners got upon Boston steeple and adjudged all they saw was hurtfully surrounded; in first of King James project set on foot and petition delivered as though it had proceeded from the country ... Sir Miles SANDYS had many friends at court and King prepossessed it was a glorious work and for the public good and King made to believe the Isle of Ely and south side of River Grant was hurtfully surrounded; but when King was hunting Lord Garret of Chippenham, Sir John Cotton of Cheneley (sic), Sir John Payton of Isleham and Sir Thomas Gee acquainted the King with all the cheats of the undertakers, that they being judges and arties had made many thousand acres which was the better by overflowing in the nature of river meadows to be land hurtfully surrounded. That they drained and meliorated a little hurtfully surrounded lands of their own and prejorated ten times as much lands which were never hurtfully drowned before, and that which was not gross and palpable ... when the King was fully instructed he enjoined secrecy and went up to the Parliament and discovered all the undertakers fallacies and concluded wittily : "It is just the same case, my Lords, as though a pack of thieves should give me £20,000 to give them a patent under my broad seal to rob my lawful subjects of £200,000 by which I should perjure myself and become a thief and tyrant. Whereupon the parliament flung it out for a base cheating monopoly; some of Sir Miles SANDYS fiends moved he might have satisfaction for the vast sum he had expended; Sir Edward Cook answered, Let those pay him that set him a work, and further added that it was fit Sir Miles should give compensation to the oppressed country for trying experiments against the owners consent. Asks and answers number of questions; includes : fens as they are produce great store of wool and lam and large fat mutton resides infinite quantities of butter and cheese and so breed great stores of cattle and are stocked with horses, mares and colts and we send fat beef to markets which affords hides and tallow and for corn, the fodder we mow off the fens in summer feeds out cattle in the winter. By which means we gather such quantities of dung that it enriches our upland and corn ground, which are contiguous halfe in halfe. Besides our fens relieves our neighbours, the uplanders in a dry summer .. thousands of cattle beside our own are preserved which would otherwise perish. So take away a third of our fens you extinguish our rents in our communing houses and our pastures and corn ground proportionably; besides thousands of cottagers which have no right of commoning must go a begging, which the owners connive at because they cannot prevent it, being so numerous. So that rape, cole-seed and hemp, is a Dutch commodity, and but trash and trumpery and pils land in respect of the afore recited commodities undertakers descried as "impudent, formidable, 'monsters to the country, bribers, imposters' and 'being the only impeders and partition wals betwixt King and People'

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325 MEPAL church notes - COLE
 329 LEVERINGTON parish accounts
 334 fenland phrases and folklore - connected with candles# c.39 # c.71
 344 fen fire engines as exhibited London 1903 # c.34.75
 349 CIVIL WAR : 1644 .. a brave party of the parliament forces having much
 battered Crowland with the Ordnance which they brought by water in long
 boats against it, the enemy at last was forced to parley ... agreed enemy's forces
 should march out of the town, the commanders and officers with their swords
 and pistols but the common soldiers to leave all their arms behind them and
 also all ordnance and ammunition ... many hundred by land and water were fain
 to be employed against only a few men within the town and now again
 surrendered to Parliament's possession. Crowland had been twice lost and
 recovered or might have proved a kind of scurvy both by land and water had
 the enemy continued in it and better manned and fortified it ...

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357 the old barges were kept working till they wore out and leaked continually so
 that they could never be left for many hours without being "scooped", having
 water removed with a great wooden shovel. Men would tell of strange voyages
 when the great tub in the fore-lighter was full of salt meat and not merely used
 to hold sails as in these degenerate days; when lightermen used to compare
 their salt meat with that eaten on lighters Sometimes in floods the horses
 were drowned n swimming across, sometimes n dry weather the horse-boat had
 t be sunk across the river to hold up water ... Some men were confirmed
 poachers. One man murdered a game keeper and as the gang went along they
 all looked to see how the fields were "bushed" so they should know how to
 draw their nets at night. As soon as the barges brought up for the night off they
 went and returned tired by morning. I remember a tale of a maid servant who
 hung in chains with her heart inn her hand. Bargees are only class of men found
 in fenland and nowhere else - quite different from canal people. Bargees no
 longer what they were : the railways have taken away their chief function; one
 can no longer walk the entire length f the Backs on barges, as once possible.
 Yet when one sees wheat field in fens being reaped by latest machinery and
 corn heaves being put on board a lighter lying in river beside the field one feels
 water-carriage will still hold its own, even though the motive power may be a
 steam-tug or petrol motor instead of horse. Short time ago at Soham the open
 space at the end of the lode was all that the railway station is now and when the
 arrival of a gang of barges was the event of the week - A. Stewart